ACROSS / A19

Landslide crushes Ifugao houses; 9 dead

METRO / A24

Suicide or murder? Cops probing QC police superintendent's death

ENTERTAINMENT/ F1

'Bubble Gang' stars, crew take comedy seriously

SPORTS / A27

Archers thwart Eagles, forge UAAP Finals clash with Warriors

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, October 1, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 295 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Cell phones double as electronic wallets

SAN MIGUEL, BULACAN—IT'S THURSDAY, so 18-year-old Dennis Tiangco is off to a bank to collect his weekly allowance, zapped by his mother—who's working in Hong Kong—to his electronic wallet: his cell phone.

Sauntering into a branch of GM Bank here, Dennis fills out a form, sends a text

CELL PHONES/ A8

PCPO MALACAÑANG PHOTO

SHE'S BACK. President Macapagal-Arroyo returns from New York and is welcomed by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon with arrival honors at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. *(See story on Page A2.)*

Neri: I've nothing more to say on GMA

By Juliet L. Javellana, Leila B. Salaverria and Dona Pazzibugan

SENATORS WHO HOPE THAT ROMULO Neri will provide crucial testimony directly linking President Macapagal-Arroyo to the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) deal are in for a big disappointment.

Neri yesterday indicated that he had nothing more to say to the Senate committees investigating the $329-million contract for the NBN project that was awarded to China's ZTE Corp.

"The Senate grilled me for 12 hours. Did they miss on any significant question?" he said in a text message to the INQUIRER when asked if he had said everything he needed to say to the senators.

Neri was the director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) when the NBN project was approved and the deal signed.

Now chair of the Commission on Higher Education, Neri sent word to the INQUIRER that he had said all he wanted to say about the ZTE deal.

Citing the confidential nature of his conversations with the President on the NBN project, he hoped the senators would respect the principle of executive privilege.

Malacañang yesterday expressed confidence that Neri would not reveal anything potentially damaging to the President.

"We trust Secretary Neri in his good sense and his sense of duty to his President," Presidential Management Staff

NERI/ A6

NERI

World pressures Burma

UN envoy talks with Suu Kyi, junta chiefs

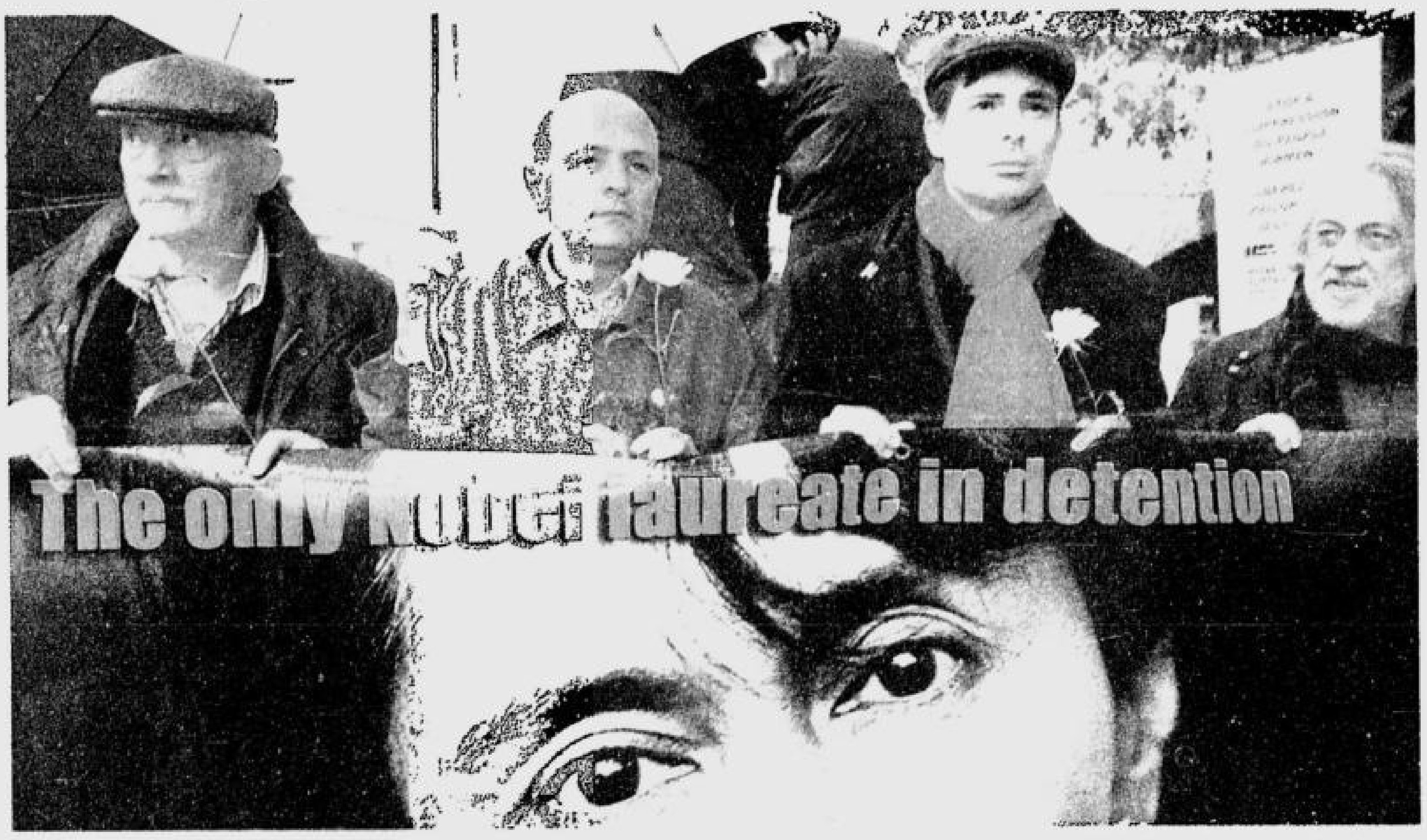
RANGOON—A UN ENVOY held back-to-back meetings on Sunday with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and the military rulers of Burma (Myanmar) amid growing international calls for the junta to bring a peaceful end to its crackdown on prodemocracy protests.

The separate talks occurred as thousands of troops locked down Burma's largest cities on Sunday. Scores of people were arrested overnight, further weakening an uprising to end 45 years of military dictatorship.

Pope Benedict XVI joined world leaders in expressing serious concern about the situation in Burma. About 1 percent of the country's 54 million people are Catholics. Another 3 percent belong to other Christian denominations.

A senior Japanese official al-

WORLD/ A12


The only Nobel laureate in detention

SUU KYI LINE. Amnesty International militants hold up a poster of Burmese Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi during a demonstration in Brussels against the military dictatorship in Burma, which drew international outrage when its troops cracked down on prodemocracy protesters and Buddhist monks in Rangoon.

AFP

Burma protest movement has not been smothered

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE TEMPTATION TO DRAW contrasts between the carnage in Rangoon (Yangon) last week as Burmese security forces brutally cracked down on peaceful protesters demanding an end to military rule and the Philippines' 1986 People Power revolution is hard to resist.

When a sea of 100,000 people, spearheaded by 30,000 monks, took to the streets chanting "Democracy, democracy," the sight evoked nostalgic images among Filipino viewers that the human wave of a million that engulfed the advancing tanks of the Marcos dictatorship was about to be replicated in Burma (Myanmar).

This turned out to be a short-lived illusion.

Instead, soldiers fired automatic rifles at the protesters and riot police swung their clubs at fleeing demonstrators, leaving at least 13 dead, including a Japanese photographer.

The vivid pictures of that crackdown that dominated the TV screen and the front pages of

BURMA/ A12

NY judge won't clear RP nurses

A NEW YORK STATE JUDGE has refused to throw out criminal charges against 10 nurses from the Philippines who were arrested after they quit their jobs at a Long Island nursing home during a labor dispute.

The nurses resigned without notice from the Avalon Gardens Rehabilitation and Health Care Center in Smithtown on Long Island, east of New York City, during the spring of 2006, forcing the facility to scramble to cover their shifts.

No harm was done to patients, but Suffolk County prosecutors accused the nurses of criminal conspiracy and endangering the welfare of children for leaving their jobs so abruptly.

Some of the home's residents included disabled children in a pediatric unit.

State regulators cleared the nurses of any administrative wrongdoing last fall, but the facility hired a lawyer and pressed District Attorney Thomas Spota to file a criminal case anyway.

The judge, Robert Doyle, denied a motion to dismiss the

NY JUDGE/ A8

Midwives are RP's new health care heroines

By Tessa R. Salazar

AS THE EXODUS OF DOCTORS and nurses continues, stories of how midwives—our "barefoot doctors"—are soldiering on in far-flung areas are aplenty.

One early morning in 1993, Teresita Dodon braved heavy rains to travel to Sablan, Benguet, for her door-to-door immunization project. She was crossing the highway at Camp Dangwa when she was sideswiped by a bus.

Dodon's life was ended by the accident, but it became the inspiration for her fellow midwives.

For her outstanding work, she was recognized posthumously by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

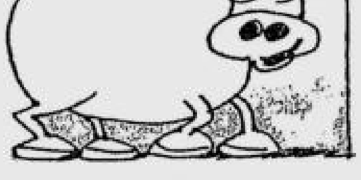
The Civil Service Commission also gave her the Dangal (Honor) award. The inscription read: "As she lay dead on the road, she was still protectively clutching the vaccines and medical paraphernalia, the tools of the trade she loved so much."

Aeta midwife Jeana de la Cruz, who conducts prenatal checkups and immunizations in the mountain villages of Castillejos, Zambales, is likewise outstanding.

De la Cruz narrated on the phone the difficult journeys she made to attend to women with complicated pregnancies, who, despite their condition, had to ride on carabao-drawn carts.

Just last week, she was called upon to remove a placenta from a 15-year-old mother. The village *hilot* (or self-trained physical therapist) was able to deliver the infant, but the placenta was left in the mother's womb.

MIDWIVES/ A8


AYAW NA NIYA MAGING JESUSA

Lani who? Appellate court spurns actress

By Leila B. Salaverria

WHAT'S IN A NAME? TO ACtress Lani Mercado-Revilla, it makes a world of difference—but she still needs the court to be on her side.

The wife of actor-senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. suffered a setback in her bid to change the name on her birth certificate from Jesusa Victoria Garcia Hernandez to Lani Mercado-Revilla when the Court of Appeals ruled against her.

LANI, WHO?/ A8

He serves arrest warrants on VIPs

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FOR THREE DECADES NOW, Edgardo Urieta has hovered like a shadow over the Philippine criminal justice system, serving arrest warrants on VIPs suspected of having run afoul of the law, and keeping them out of harm's way upon their prosecution.

As Sandiganbayan chief sheriff, Urieta has been an eyewitness to dramatic moments when the long arm of the law finally catches up with some of the country's hitherto high and mighty, and they in turn submit themselves to their fate like ordinary mortals.

There were the late military chief Gen. Fabian Ver, former first lady Imelda Marcos, business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco, ex-Sen. Francisco Tatad and ex-military comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia.

The most celebrated person on Urieta's list is ousted President Joseph Estrada, who two weeks ago was found guilty of plunder and sentenced to a maximum 40-year jail term.

"Many people believe that he (Estrada) is nonsensical, a womanizer as portrayed in many text jokes. But he can be profound, too," Urieta told the

HE SERVES/ A6

URIETA: Law's long arm catches some of the high and mighty.

EDWIN BACASMAS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2007

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Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The western sections of Central and Southern Luzon and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: RHEA BLANCAS, PDI RESEARCH/09/30/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

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Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening

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SUPERLOTTO 6/49

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'Jpepa favors RP on waste'

DENR says more toxic trash will leave country than come in

WHAT'S INSIDE

ERAP WANTS more time with ma, cool to pardon /A10

OTHER FIGHTS distract Army from war with Reds /A13

TALK TO MEDIA, Army chief advises commanders /A13

By TJ Burgonio

THE PROPOSED JAPAN-PHILIPPINES ECONOMic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa) would facilitate the continued shipment by the Philippines of hazardous waste to Japan, but not the other way around.

A Department of Environment and Natural Resources official made this fresh pitch for the Jpepa after the Senate foreign relations committee indicated it would not recommend against its ratification.

Environment Undersecretary Demetrio Ignacio said the country exported an average of 10-million kilos of hazardous waste to nine countries over the past two years since it lacked a waste treatment facility.

The bulk of this was shipped to Japan, he said.

The waste exports totaled 11.4-million kg in 2005, and 10.7 million in 2006.

As of July this year, some 1.7-million kg had been shipped abroad.

Of the nine countries, which include South Korea, the United States, Germany, Singapore, Finland, Thailand, France and the Netherlands, Japan emerged as the No. 1 destination for waste from the Philippines.

Of the total waste exports, 47.3 percent was shipped to Japan in 2005 and 27.8 percent in 2006. As of July this year, 42.7 percent has gone to Japan.

"This Jpepa can facilitate the disposal for Philippine hazardous waste in Japan. If the tariffs are lowered, then there will be less costs for us to export the waste," Ignacio told reporters.

But Richard Gutierrez, Asia-Pacific director of Basel Action Network, scoffed at the claim as "another palliative" to convince the public to accept the trade treaty.

The sustainable approach to waste is to prevent their generation, look for ways to reduce them, and if these two are not enough, focus on other ways of disposal, he pointed out.

"With or without Jpepa, we're exporting waste. We don't need this treaty. What the DENR isn't telling us is that we're importing more waste than we're exporting," Von Hernandez of Greenpeace said.

After three hearings by the foreign relations committee, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago remained unconvinced about the benefits of the treaty.

Ignacio also said that contrary to perception, Jpepa does not mention anything about allowing the entry of toxic wastes into the country.

"It's not true. Under Jpepa, toxic wastes are considered Japanese goods. Look at Annex 1, Article 29, subsections I, J and L on the definition of originating goods, wastes are included as goods coming from Japan," Gutierrez said.

"The fact that hazardous wastes are under a zero taffif regime encourages dumping of waste in the country," Hernandez said.

Ignacio explained that hazardous wastes were included in Jpepa because the harmonized system, a uniform classification of all goods traded in the world, was adopted in the Jpepa negotiations.

But he made the assurance the country would prohibit the entry of such waste in compliance with its own laws, and the Basel Ban Convention, and that Japan would respect this.

"Any toxic waste can only enter the country by smuggling, whether you have Jpepa or not," he said.

Ignacio, however, admitted that Jpepa would allow the importation of recyclables containing hazardous substances for use by the recycling industry.

These materials will be processed and the recycled products will be sold locally or re-exported. "We have treatment facilities for recyclables," he said.

Commenting on Ignacio's admission, Hernandez said: "That basically kills the assurance that no hazardous waste will be traded. Jpepa will exacerbate this kind of waste trading." *With a report from Jerome Aning*

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After New York, GMA off to China, India

By Leila B. Salaverria

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo, home from a three-day visit to New York, will cool her heels for only a couple of days then take off for China and India tomorrow.

Ms Arroyo arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport late Saturday night but gave no arrival statement.

In New York, she delivered the Philippines' country report to the United Nations General Assembly, met with international business leaders and expressed support for Burmese prodemocracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

She is expected in China tomorrow to attend the Special Olympics in Shanghai and meet with Chinese officials including President Hu Jintao.

From China, she will proceed on Wednesday to India for a three-day state visit aimed at boosting trade and political ties. She is due to meet with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh besides addressing business leaders in the Indian capital and in the financial hub of Mumbai, an Agence France Presse report quoted an Indian official as saying.

Arroyo's visit to India will be the first by a Philippine president in over 10 years. The last was by then President Fidel Ramos in March 1997.

"India's ties with the Philippines are not as extensive as with Malaysia or Thailand," said Mohini Kaul, an international relations professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Though New Delhi launched its "Look East" policy in the early 1990s aimed at forging new ties with the fast-growing economies of Southeast Asia, the "Philippines somehow did not figure in India's calculations."

"India saw the Philippines as a surrogate of the United States, which was reinforced by Manila's (frosty) reaction to India's nuclear tests in 1998," Kaul said.

Ms Arroyo is expected to return on Oct. 7.

With an AFP report

Antigraft agency tells why it axed NBN prober

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

THE PRESIDENTIAL ANTI-Graft Commission (PAGC) has defended its dismissal of an official who was investigating the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with China's ZTE Corp., saying she violated the commission's rules when she disclosed the agency's investigation officials behind the NBN contract.

In a statement, the PAGC said that dismissed graft investigation officer Vida Bocar was guilty of "unauthorized disclosure" of confidential information through her act of sending an e-mail to newspaper columnist Jarius Bondoc on the ZTE case, which the latter published in his June 18 column.

Bocar had supposedly sought Bondoc's assistance in gathering documentary evidence regarding the ZTE contract.

PAGC said Bocar "acted with haste," which caused the preemptive disclosure to the pubic of a confidential motu proprio investigation being conducted by the agency.

The PGAC hired Bocar as a grant investigation officer under a contract of services for the period of June 1 to Aug. 31, 2007. Her contract was pre-terminated on June 22 for violation of Section 6 of Executive Order No. 531.

EO 531 prohibits the commission and its personnel from "disclosing or making public any record or information in connection with any investigation."

The same clause provides that it is only the PAGC chairperson who may disclose any information to the public.

As a PAGC investigator, one of the cases assigned to Bocar was the ZTE contract.

PAGC said Bocar exhibited "disregard for authority and established rules and operating procedures" by sending an electronic message unauthorized by the commission or its chair.

The agency said Bocar should have exercised caution knowing the person she sent the information to was a journalist who makes his living by making information known to the public.

Kin of missing activists happy about amparo

ILOILO CITY—THE FAMILIES OF TWO missing activists here welcomed the Supreme Court's issuance of rules for the writ of amparo, a legal remedy that would compel law enforcers to search for missing persons.

Luis Posa, elder brother of missing activist Ma. Luisa Posa-Dominado, said last week the new rules would be "a big help to families desperately looking for their loved ones."

Posa said his family would consult with their lawyers on the filing of a petition for a writ of amparo when the rules take effect on Oct. 24.

The writ of amparo is broader than the better known writ of habeas corpus, which compels law enforcers to produce an arrested person. Should law enforcers deny they have the missing person in their custody, the writ of amparo compels them to search for that person, and holds them accountable if they don't.

Dominado and fellow activist Nilo Arado were abducted by armed men on April 12 in Barangay Cabanbanan, Oton, Iloilo. A companion, human rights worker Jose Ely Garachico, was shot and seriously wounded but was left behind.

The families have accused military agents of being responsible for the abduction but the military has repeatedly denied this. *Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

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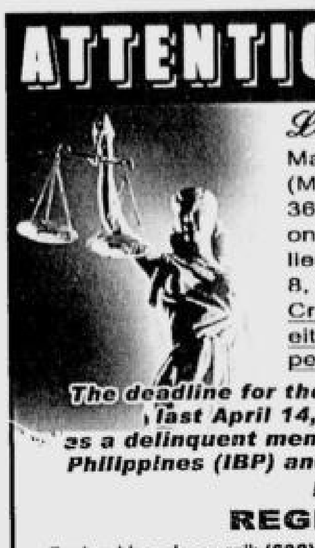

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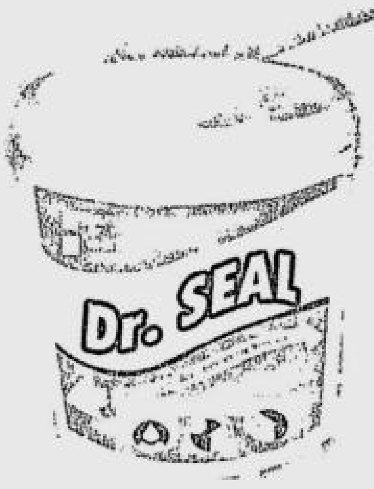

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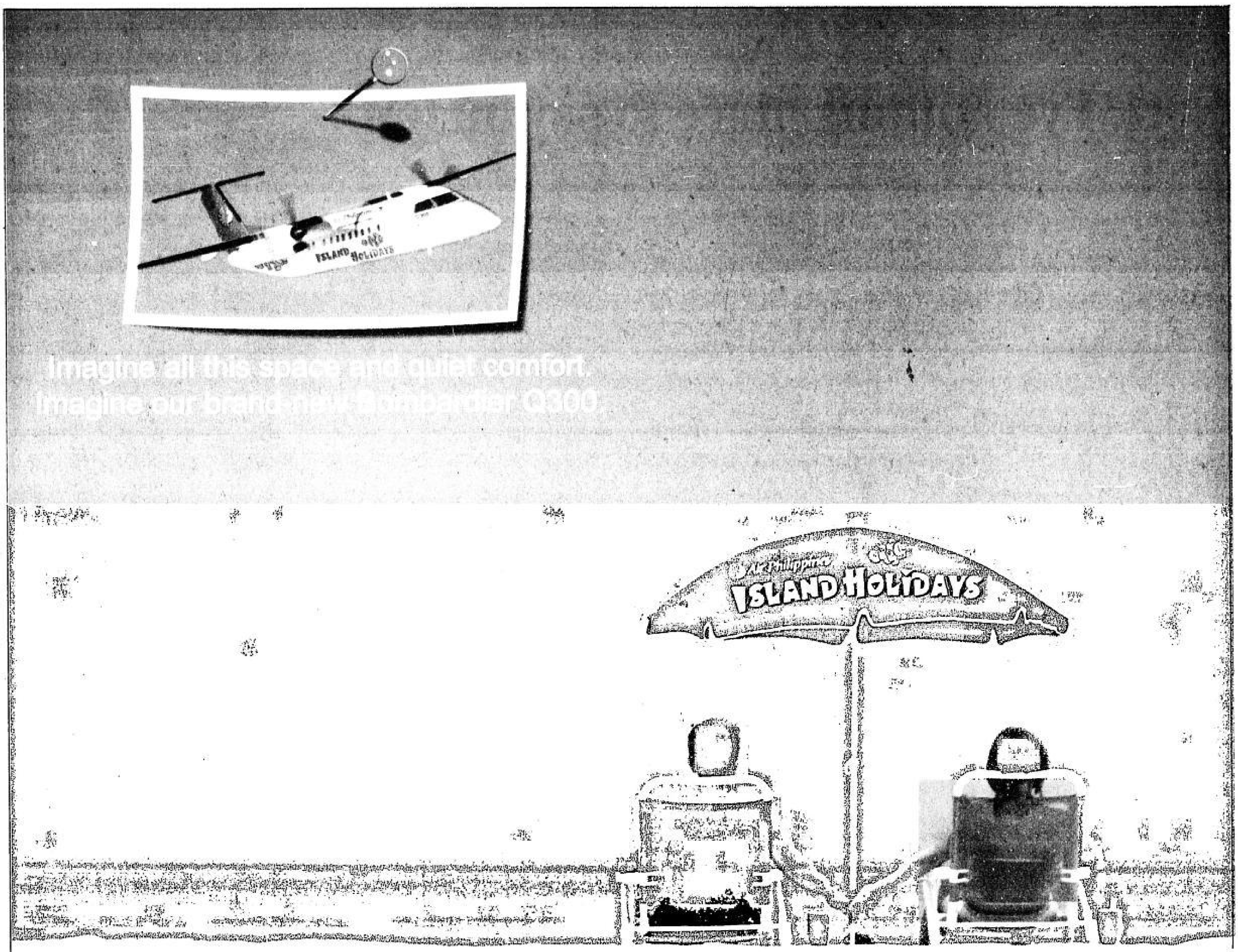
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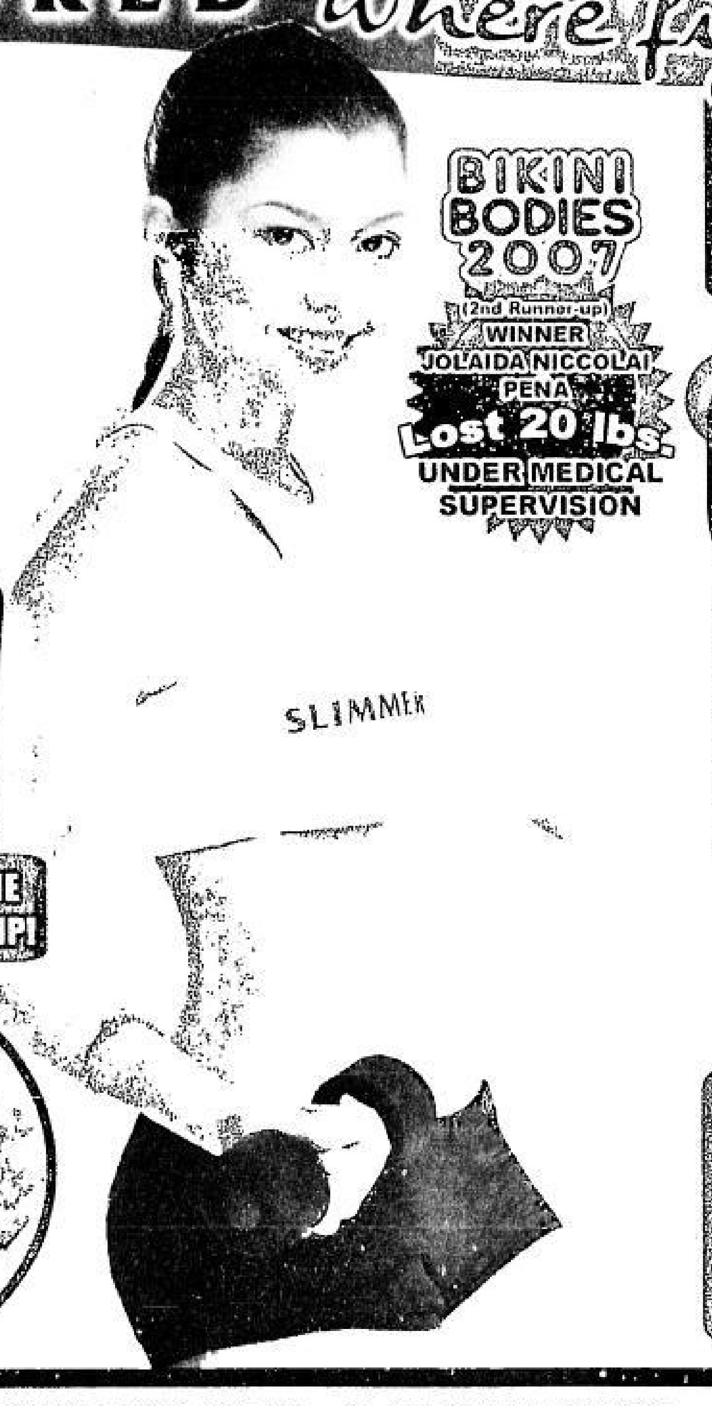
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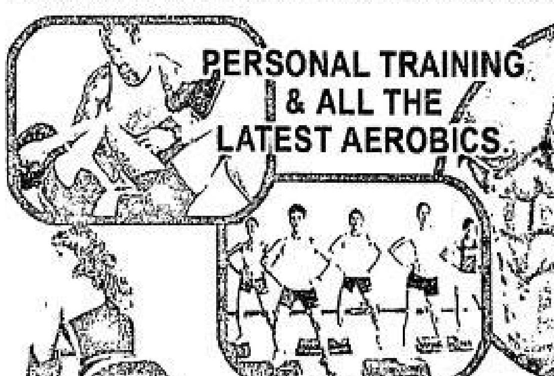
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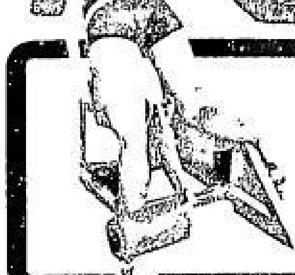

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Neri: I've nothing more to say on GMA

From page A1

chief Cerge Remonde said in a phone interview.

Neri testified in the Senate last week that Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. had offered him P200 million to endorse the ZTE proposal to undertake the NBN project.

Neri said he told Ms Arroyo about Abalos' alleged bribe offer and she told him not to accept it.

He did not say why the President continued to favor ZTE's proposal in spite of the bribe offered to him.

Pressed by senators, Neri refused to say what else did he and Ms Arroyo talked about in connection with the project.

Neri's insistence on invoking executive privilege to evade questions on the President's involvement may set the stage for a collision course with the Senate.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, who heads the joint inquiry into the NBN deal, said the blue ribbon, trade and defense committees would discuss on Monday how to challenge Neri's continued invoking of executive privilege.

Under Executive Order No. 464, executive privilege covers "confidential or classified information between the President and her officials."

If there was nothing controversial in his conversations with Ms Arroyo about the ZTE proposal, Neri would not have invoked executive privilege to evade questions during his testimony in the Senate on Wednesday, according to the senators.

Ms Arroyo witnessed the signing of the contract for the NBN project between Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza and ZTE vice president Yu Yong in Boao, China, on April 21.

Documents that came to light showed that Ms Arroyo's involvement in the ZTE deal was more than superficial.

Official records submitted to the blue ribbon committee showed that Ms Arroyo authorized two Cabinet secretaries to negotiate for the award of the NBN project to ZTE months before Neda began its evaluation of the project, according to gmanews.tv, the website of GMA News and Public Affairs.

GMA News said that four days before the formal talks with ZTE started, Ms Arroyo brought the ZTE chair to Cotabato City as her special guest at the joint Cabinet-Regional Development Council meeting on July 8, 2006.

The President told residents of the city that ZTE would invest $1 billion in telecommunications and other projects in the country.

Four days later, Ms Arroyo signed a "special authority" document giving Trade Secretary Peter Favila "full powers" to "negotiate, conclude and sign, for and on behalf of the Republic of the Philippines" the award of investments projects, including the NBN, to ZTE International Investment Corp., ZTE Corp.'s sister firm.

Remonde said Neri and the Palace could "possibly" meet again before the next Senate hearing on the NBN deal with ZTE to discuss Neri's authorization to invoke executive privilege in refusing to disclose certain information.

Remonde said Neri was upset about the INQUIRER story on the executive session in the Senate in which the former Neda chief was reported to be close to revealing more about the controversial ZTE contract.

Four INQUIRER sources said Neri was "on the verge" of disclosing the rest of his account on the alleged lobbying and bribery involving the NBN deal when Sen. Joker Arroyo and Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. reportedly intervened.

"He feels the [INQUIRER] story was trying to drive a wedge between him and the President," Remonde said.

On radio dzBB yesterday, Senator Arroyo described as "completely false" the INQUIRER headline that said he intervened to prevent Neri from divulging the President's role in the NBN deal during the Sept. 26 Senate executive session.

The strict confidentiality of the closed-door executive session has been compromised by some senators who spoke to the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity, according to Arroyo.

For his part, Andaya decried what he said was the impression that he had barged into the executive session.

Andaya said he was at the session from the beginning as Neri's lawyer.

He serves arrest …

From page A1

INQUIRER in an interview, recalling how the disgraced leader behaved through his six-year landmark plunder trial and outside of it.

There were many occasions—a wedding or a birthday party of a family member, awarding rites, speaking engagements, medical checkups and quick weekend visits with his mother, whose condition is now deteriorating.

Urieta the other day had to forego his day off again to oversee security during Estrada's 10-hour court pass to visit 102-year-old Mary Ejercito at the San Juan Medical Center.

The 61-year-old sheriff, who usually wears a *barong Tagalog*, was recently named by the Professional Regulation Commission the "Outstanding Criminologist" this year.

The Occidental Mindoro native also received commendations from the Supreme Court and Sandiganbayan justices for the well-planned security arrangements during the Estrada verdict promulgation on Sept. 12.

Being the overseer of Estrada's security, Urieta has noticed how the former President can engage one in a long dialogue about something he had just read or how he would quote parables from the Bible when lecturing his aides in his Tanay, Rizal, rest house where he has been detained since 2004.

Photographic memory

Urieta said Estrada had a photographic memory that served him well as a box-office action star and politician.

"He easily remembers things. But what he is particular about is his hair. He makes sure that the media crowding him won't ruin his hairdo," Urieta said with a chuckle.

Where the prying eyes of the media and their cameras cannot go, Urieta has easy access—such as the toilet on the sixth floor of the Sandiganbayan, where the heavily guarded Estrada had to answer the call of nature moments after the guilty verdict was read.

There, the ousted President managed to bring his quarreling sons—San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada—together in a hug, said Urieta.

"The former President said, '*O, bahala na kayo, ha*' and the two hugged each other. JV was in tears," Urieta recalled.

Healthy respect for Erap

From his perspective as an onlooker, Urieta said that despite the brickbats, the Arroyo administration has a healthy respect for the disgraced leader as shown when Estrada turned 67 in 2004.

President Macanagal-Arroyo sent Estrada a gold-plated desk set as a birthday gift, Urieta said. "Estrada showed it to us in Tanay. He disclosed that it came from the President," he said.

Urieta first met Estrada on April 16, 2001, when the ex-President voluntarily surrendered to post bail for six of the seven criminal charges filed against him in the antigraft court.

His next encounter with Estrada came nine days later during his arrest in his Polk Street residence. There, "the Estrada family and a few supporters received Urieta in the dining room with a soda he had requested in jest.

To ease tension

"I asked for a bottle of soft drinks if that was the only way to break the tension, to show them that we came there not to forcibly and rashly arrest the former President, and that the procedure could be done in a peaceful way," he said.

Urieta was expecting a violent encounter that day. The arrest warrant he served on Estrada was the first in history to be issued against a former Philippine president. Happily, Estrada surrendered without a fight.

The tension he experienced then was similar to that he felt when he went to Malacañang Park to arrest Gen. Fabian Ver, who was among the suspects in the murders of opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino and his alleged gunman, Rolando Galman.

"Nobody wanted to come with us because they were scared. We were afraid for our lives, too," he admitted.

Ver, then the Armed Forces chief of staff, was not around. So Urieta waited until he arrived before dawn.

"We requested him to come with us, and he did," Urieta recounted. The late general did not want it to be remembered as an arrest; he merely surrendered, the sheriff said.

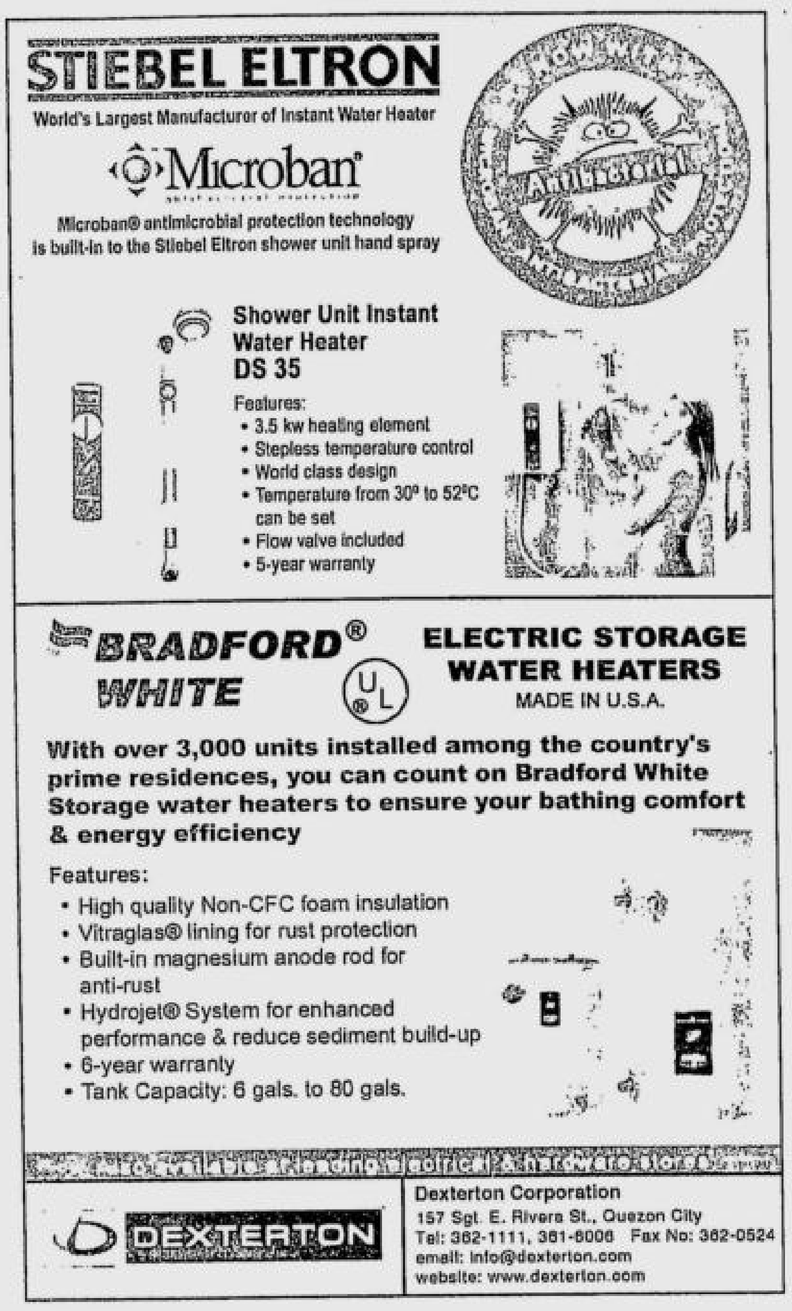
Volkswagen ride

Urieta also recalled having Francisco Tatad ride with him in an old Volkswagen with a malfunctioning air-conditioner when he took him into custody in 1985 in connection with corruption charges.

"These VIPs may appear invincible at first. They may look hard-nosed, but once you have served them their arrest warrant, they yield like any ordinary people who have to go through the process of our justice system," Urieta said.

Imelda Marcos may have shown force when she submitted herself to the Sandiganbayan years ago, appearing with an entourage of aides, bodyguards, nurses and lawyers.

"But she was addressing us with '*po*' or '*opo*' while filling out the arrest forms and affixing her thumbmark to the documents," recalled the amused sheriff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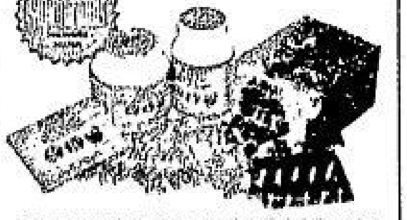

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NY judge won't clear RP nurses

From page A1

case on Friday.

A lawyer for the nurses, James Druker, said his clients had a right to quit and were innocent of any crime.

"This is the classic uphill battle, but we're going to fight on," Druker told the Newsday newspaper after the ruling.

US authorities said the nurses quit on the advice of their lawyer, Felix Vinluan, who is also charged.

Vinluan and the nurses could face up to six years in prison if convicted on the charges.

Topnotcher

One of the nurses is Elmer Jacinto, the topnotcher in the 2004 medical board exams in the Philippines.

Jacinto, who finished his premed course of nursing magna cum laude, decided to work as a nurse in the United States for the good pay.

A nurse in the Philippines makes $150 to $250 a month; doctors make $300 to $800. But the average registered nurse in the United States earns $4,000 a month.

Last year, Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan, a former health secretary, said that over the past five years, 9,000 Filipino doctors (out of about 56,000) had retrained as nurses and that 5,000 had gone abroad.

Jacinto and some 20 other Filipino nurses were recruited to work in the United States for three years by Sentosa Recruitment Agency (SRA).

Sentosa custody

When they arrived in New York in November 2005, the nurses were turned over to Sentosa Ben Philipson, which in turn placed them in the custody of Sentosa Care LLC, a limited liability company that runs nursing homes in New York.

A third entity called Prompt Nursing Employment Agency/Sentosa service also came into the picture apparently as the actual employer of the nurses, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who took the cudgels for the nurses in the Philippines, said last year.

SRA and the network of nursing homes are owned by one person identified by Vinluan as Ben Philipson, who is chief operating officer and managing partner.

80 km from Manhattan

Jacinto and seven others were sent to Avalon Gardens, a nursing home in Smithtown, about 80 kilometers from Manhattan.

Jacinto and his colleagues complained that they did not get the promised pay of between $21 and $35 an hour.

They also failed to get benefits, which were specified in their employment contracts, free malpractice insurance, pay differential for night shift duty and flexible work schedule from 8 to 12 hours.

Overworked

They said they were overworked. Each of them was required to attend to 35 patients round the clock, instead of the ideal ratio of six patients per nurse.

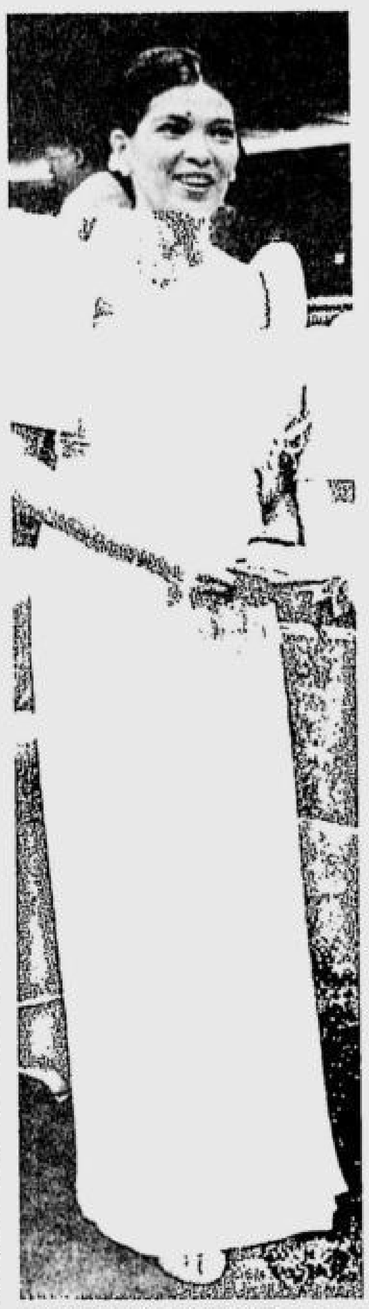
The employer, which had promised two months free housing, assigned eight nurses to a small, dingy home with a single bathroom that did not always work. Jacinto and another man slept on pull-out couches in the living room.

Walkout without notice

On April 7, 2006, Jacinto and 10 others quit. In all, 26 Filipino nurses left, including five trained doctors.

Their employer, who claims the nurses were treated fairly, said many walked out without notice, endangering patients requiring constant care.

In the Philippines, the issue linked a Malacañang official. The nurses charged that the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration recalled last year its suspension order against SRA at the instance of then Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor. *AP and Inquirer archives*



JESUSA Victoria Garcia Hernandez, better known as Lani Mercado.

Lani who? Appellate court spurns actress

From page A1

In a recently promulgated decision, the appellate court reversed the ruling issued by the Bacoor Regional Trial Court granting Mercado's petition for a name change.

The Bacoor court handed down its ruling in December 2000 prior to Mercado's bid for public office in the 2001 elections.

The Office of the Solicitor General had opposed her petition on the grounds that the Bacoor court had failed to follow the process for conducting a hearing on the issue.

In its Sept. 20 decision, the appellate court upheld the solicitor general.

Notice of hearing

According to the appellate court, the Bacoor RTC conducted the initial hearing on Mercado's petition for a name change less than four months after the publication of the hearing notice—and this was prohibited under the Rules of Court.

The Rules of Court state that the RTC should publish the notice of hearing for three successive weeks and set the date for a hearing but not within 30 days prior to an election and not within four months after the last publication of the notice.

'Solgen is correct'

In Mercado's case, the hearing was scheduled just a little over a month after the last day of the publication of the notice on Nov. 2, 2000.

The appellate court said the hearing should have been set not earlier than March 3, 2001. Hence, the Bacoor RTC did not acquire jurisdiction over Mercado's petition.

"The solicitor general correctly argued that to dispense with the requirement under ... the Rules of Court would render the publication useless and ineffective, considering that it is through publication that the public is apprised of the petition and thereby invited to submit ... such information relevant thereto as may be in their possession or within their knowledge," the appellate court said.

In October 2000, Mercadosought to change her name on her birth certificate to Lani Mercado-Revilla, in preparation for running for public office in the 2001 elections.

Better known as Lani

Mercado said she wanted to avoid confusion since she used the name more often than the name listed on her birth certificate, and was better known by it.

She also said she wanted to avoid the problem faced by her husband—who was born Jose Mari Bautista—when he ran for governor in 1995 and 1998.

The Bacoor court on Dec. 15, 2000, granted her petition.

Midwives are RP's new health care heroines

From page A1

"I still check on her," she said.

For her efforts, De la Cruz, 40, was awarded by the multinational firm Johnson & Johnson.

That was in 1999. Today, as a casual employee of a rural health unit, she receives a pitiful P4,000 a month to support her three children whose ages range from 3 to 10. (Her husband Celso tends to the youngest full-time.)

New heroes

Midwives are the new health care heroes, declared Dr. Lulu Bravo, professor of pediatrics and vice chancellor and executive director of the University of the Philippines' National Institute of Health in Manila.

"Without the midwives, we're left with nothing. We're out of nurses. Doctors are becoming nurses. Midwives are the ones left behind," Bravo said.

Dr. Yolanda Oliveros, director of the Department of Health's National Center for Disease Prevention and Control, agreed, saying that while practicing their profession in far-flung provinces was hardly lucrative, "midwives stay there."

Indeed, these unsung heroes hail from as far south as Surigao, where a banca carrying a midwife and a nurse carrying their immunization kits recently capsized.

That scene was replicated in the north, in Abra, where another midwife and another nurse, Elena Buenafe and Rosario Magala, respectively, drowned while crossing a river, their medical kits in hand to the very end of their lives.

"Some people call us *doktora*," said Patricia Gomez, president of the Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines Inc. (Imap). "Our midwives cross deep rivers and [negotiate] slippery mountain trails in rebel-infested areas."

Oliveros said that per recent assessments, the recommended ratio is one midwife for every 3,000 people. But Gomez said that in some areas, the ratio is one midwife for 30,000 people.

Doing much more

Midwives mainly deliver babies. A number also stick intravenous drips in patients before they are rushed to provincial hospitals. (The DOH has conducted emergency IV training for midwives.)

And they do much more, Gomez said: "More than 40 DOH programs rest on the midwives' shoulders."

These programs include immunizing mothers and their children for diarrhea, malaria, dengue, TB-DOTS (Tuberculosis-Directly Observed Treatment Short-course), tetanus, hepatitis B, diphtheria, polio and measles; counseling mothers, and educating couples on family planning, nutrition and pregnancy.

Edna Beguia, 54, has been a midwife for 30 years, and is thankful that she has not had a single maternal death in all that time.

A colleague of Gomez at the Imap, Beguia does the rounds of 17 barangays in Real, Quezon, where she, along with five other midwives, provides services to a population of 36,000. (Only one doctor and a nurse are stationed in the area.)

Beguia recounted how she tended to a childbirth with half her body submerged in floodwaters. The day was Nov. 29, 2004, when a flash flood engulfed Real, killing hundreds of men, women and children, and wiping out the main health center.

A number of women had their babies on that day; three of them were attended by Beguia on her makeshift delivery table.

The flood had washed away her obstetrics bag, and she was left with just a pair of surgeon's scissors and a cord clamp.

Water birth

Beguia also recounted how she was able to conduct a "water birth" in San Pedro, Laguna, on April 17, 2003—a first in the country, Gomez said.

The mother had been searching the Internet for referrals on water birthing in the Philippines. Four midwives—two from the United Kingdom, one from Oregon in the United States, and another from Canada—referred her to Beguia.

As it turned out, Beguia had hands-on experience with water birthing in London. In 2002, she was invited by the Association of Radical Midwives in the United Kingdom for an eight-month immersion in London to observe natural and water births.

P10,000 gross

A water birth—a procedure that immerses the mother in lukewarm water during delivery—has its advantages, according to Beguia. Pain and tearing are significantly reduced, as the lukewarm water enables the muscles to be more elastic. Bleeding is also controlled.

In 1977, Beguia's starting monthly salary as a midwife was P366. After 30 years in service, she now earns just a little over P10,000 before taxes.

Her husband, Rogelio, 58, is a retired member of the Philippine Coast Guard. They have five children, two of whom are midwives themselves.

Beguia's mother, Justa, was one of the recipients of the DOH training for *hilot* at the Dr. Jose Fabella Hospital in Manila in 1940. Now 86, Justa assists in childbirths to this day.

Beguia has received awards from the PRC, the Perinatal Association of the Philippines and Johnson & Johnson.

2-year course

Midwifery was introduced in the Philippines in 1922 as a one-year course. It now takes two years, with graduates required to hurdle a board examination.

According to Oliveros, efforts are being exerted to upgrade midwifery to a four-year course, and to make amendments to the midwifery law.

"With this move of making midwifery a four-year course, thus elevating it to a higher professional level, and with the problem of the migration of doctors and nurses, there really should be legislation on the official functions of midwives," Oliveros said.

PRC records show 150,722 registered midwives as of June 2007. There is no information on the number of midwives who have gone abroad.

Licensed Filipino midwives can practice their profession in the Middle East, but not in the United Kingdom, United States and certain other Asian countries, where midwives are required to complete a six-year course.

Per Gomez's estimate, there are 216 midwifery schools nationwide.

Retooling

The relationship between midwives and village *hilot* is also evolving to benefit areas where doctors and nurses are lacking.

"We don't encourage infant delivery by the *hilot*. It is the midwives who should deliver babies," Oliveros said.

She said the DOH was "retooling" the *hilot* to allow them to assist midwives, or tend to mothers' postpartum (after birth) needs.

"Mothers want *hilot* for personal services, like massage, bathing, taking care of infants. We can retool them to continue such functions, but not deliver babies," she said.

Cell phones double as electronic wallets

From page A1

message via his phone to a bank line dedicated to the service.

In a matter of seconds, the transaction is approved and the teller gives him P2,500, minus a 1-percent fee. He doesn't need a bank account to retrieve the money.

More than 5.5 million Filipinos now use their cell phones as virtual wallets, making the Philippines a leader among developing nations in providing financial transactions over mobile networks.

Mobile banking services, which are also catching on in Kenya and South Africa, enable people who don't have bank accounts to transfer money easily, quickly and safely. It's spreading in the developing world because mobile phones are much more common than bank accounts.

The system is particularly useful for the 8 million Filipinos—10 percent of the population—who work overseas and send money home, like Dennis' mother, Anna Tiangco. Previously, she sent money via a bank wire transfer, which costs HK$20 ($2.50) and takes two days to clear. The cell phone method costs only HK$1 (13 US cents) and is nearly instantaneous.

Japanese way

"The good thing here is, wherever my children are, they can text me and I can send money immediately," she said by telephone from Hong Kong.

Consumers also can store limited amounts of money on their cell phones to buy things at stores that participate in the network—although this practice isn't yet widespread in the Philippines.

Many more Filipinos use their phones to send airtime values called "loads" to prepaid subscribers. A parent, for example, can send a P60 load to replenish a child's cell phone, charged to the parent's account.

While Japanese and South Korean consumers have been using cell phones as virtual wallets for several years, those systems use a computer chip implanted in handset that allows people to buy things by waving the phone in front of a sensor.

Avid texters

The Philippine system relies on simple text messages, which cost just P1 to send.

The 41 million cell phone users in the Philippines are avid texters. The electronic connections have fostered a culture of quick greetings and forwarded jokes. Text messages also played a key role in mobilizing crowds that fueled the 2001 "people power" revolt that ousted President Joseph Estrada.

The Philippines' two biggest mobile service providers, Globe Telecom and Smart Communications, have harnessed this penchant for text messaging to enable consumers to enter the world of e-commerce.

Tapping into the cash flow from overseas Filipinos—who sent home $12.7 billion last year—Globe and Smart forged partnerships with foreign mobile providers and banks, as well as with local banks and merchants, to create a network that allows users to send and receive cash internationally.

How it works

When Anna Tiangco wants to send cash home, for example, she goes to a branch of her local provider, Hong Kong CSL Ltd., where a clerk credits her cell phone with the amount she has brought with her.

She then transfers the money to family members via text messages—in essence, instructing her providers to deduct money from her balance to the recipients she indicates.

If a cell phone loaded with cash values is lost or stolen, the money can't be tapped as long as the personal identification number isn't revealed. Control over the funds can be restored with a replacement SIM card from either mobile provider.

G-cash users

The system was "built for remote payments and for the unbanked markets," said Rizza Maniego Eala, president of G-Xchange, Globe's subsidiary in charge of its G-Cash money transfer service.

Eala said her company's 500,000 G-Cash users transfer about $100 million monthly, but she declined to say how many transactions involve remittances from overseas.

Smart offers a slightly different money transfer system, used by about 5 million Filipinos, that links cash or a debit card to a cell phone.

Users load up their phones with money via text messages. The card—which costs P200 but does not require a bank account—can then be used to purchase goods in establishments that accept MasterCard, or to withdraw cash from an ATM machine.

Helping OFWs

According to Smart Communications spokesperson Ramon Isberto, each time the recipient spends the money, the sender receives a transaction message. That allows the sender to see how the funds are used.

"The added value there now is that Filipinos overseas have greater control over their funds. Believe me, that is important to them," Isberto said.

Smart and UAE's leading telecommunications operator, Etisalat, have agreed to provide money transfer service to hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in the Middle East.

Smart also will soon launch a remittance system in Bahrain in partnership with MTC-Vodafone and Ahli United Bank there, and Banco de Oro in the Philippines, Isberto said.

Paying bills

"The bank products remain clearly bank products. We positioned ourselves as an enabler for banks and other financial institutions to provide products and services to their customers in ways they would otherwise not have been able to," he said.

Aside from transferring cash and making purchases, both Globe and Smart also allow their users to pay bills with their phones.

According to Anna Tiangco, she pays her family's electric bills in San Miguel from Hong Kong via text messages, just like she sends money.

"Even if we are far apart, it's like we are still together," she said. "This is like my wallet now." *AP*

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Erap seeks more time with ma, cools on pardon

By Jocelyn R. Uy
and Christian V. Esguerra

WITH TALK OF A PRESIDENTial pardon still up in the air, convicted plunderer ex-President Joseph Estrada said yesterday he would ask the Sandiganbayan to allow him longer visits with his sick mother.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Estrada said his 102-year-old mother, Mary Ejercito, could go at anytime. Estrada said he wanted to spend at least three days with her in the hospital.

The court on Saturday granted him only a 10-hour daylight pass from detention at his Tanay, Rizal, estate to visit his mother at San Juan Medical Center.

"I hope the court would allow me to spend a longer time with her. I am not going to run away. They should remember that I was offered twice to leave the country but I did not accept it," Estrada said.

Exhaust all means

An unconditional pardon offered by Malacañang would have accorded him liberty to visit his ailing mother but the former president said he decided to exhaust all legal means to overturn the guilty verdict meted out to him in his plunder case. He has filed a motion for reconsideration.

Estrada said he was firm about accepting an absolute pardon only if it was offered to him and entailed no admission of guilt.

He had earlier said the main reason he was considering the offer was because of his mother.

Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, spokesperson of Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino, told the INQUIRER yesterday they favored shelving the presidential pardon for Estrada because Malacañang was merely using the issue to "defuse" the raging National Broadband Network Scandal.

"The (NBN) controversy is already spinning out of control so they need (Estrada) to divert the public's attention," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez noted that Malacañang officials initiated the discussions on the possibility of granting Estrada a pardon at the height of the $329-million NBN project controversy.

No less than First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo has been implicated in the controversy for allegedly telling Jose "Joey de Venecia III to "back off" of the lucrative deal to China's ZTE Corp.

A political ploy

"The way they're treating him [Estrada]," Rodriguez said, "it would be better to forget about the Malacañang initiative, which is only a political ploy."

Last week, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, also the presidential adviser on political affairs, visited Estrada in detention at his Tanay, Rizal, estate to discuss the matter of a pardon.

Rodriguez said the Arroyo administration had since been "blowing hot and cold" on the pardon. He said he had received information that Puno was not really authorized to negotiate with Estrada.

Rodriguez said the decision to file a motion for reconsideration in the antigraft court was meant as a "safeguard" for Estrada in case Malacañang changed its mind about the pardon offer.

"Can you imagine if we didn't file it?" he said. "The ruling would have been final. And if the offer was withdrawn, where would he go?"

Coast Guard looking for 1,000 good men

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE PHILIPPINE Coast Guard is set to hire 1,000 new recruits to boost its present strength of 4,000, according to PCG officer in charge Vice Admiral Danilo Abinoja.

"We actually need an optimum number of 25,000 men and women to be able to perform our duties well," Abinoja told reporters in an interview last week.

He said it would be about 10 years before the PCG could take in 10,000 more recruits. In the meantime, the agency was given additional funds by the Department of Budget and Management to implement the recruitment.

'Identity we lack'

The PCG chief also said he would prioritize the passage of the Coast Guard Law during his term. "The law would finally give us the identity we sorely lack."

He explained that being under a civilian agency, namely, the Department of Transportation and Communications, has posed problems for the Coast Guard, especially since the agency has always considered itself "military in nature."

"Civilian agencies require a retirement age of 65, while military men leave the service at 56," Abinoja said. "Personally, I believe PCG officers and personnel should retire at 56, just like their counterparts in the police and military."

Bill passed twice

He said he talked with Sen. Richard Gordon, who promised to push for the passage of the bill in the Senate.

"The bill has actually been passed twice in the lower house, but was snubbed in the Senate," the PCG chief said. "With Senator Gordon's support, we are hoping that we will finally have the identity we need with the passage of the Coast Guard Law."

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Villa Granada de Guia, PWCTU president, said Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim will be the guest of honor and speaker. Bishop Cezar Punzalan, president of the Philippine Bible Society, will deliver the inspirational message.

The chair of the event is Rosella Jean Puno, with Commissioner Elsie B. de Veyra as cochair. De Guia will deliver the president's report. There will be a program of songs and folk dances and door prizes.

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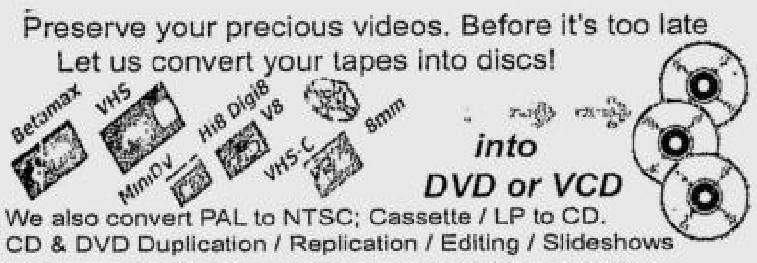
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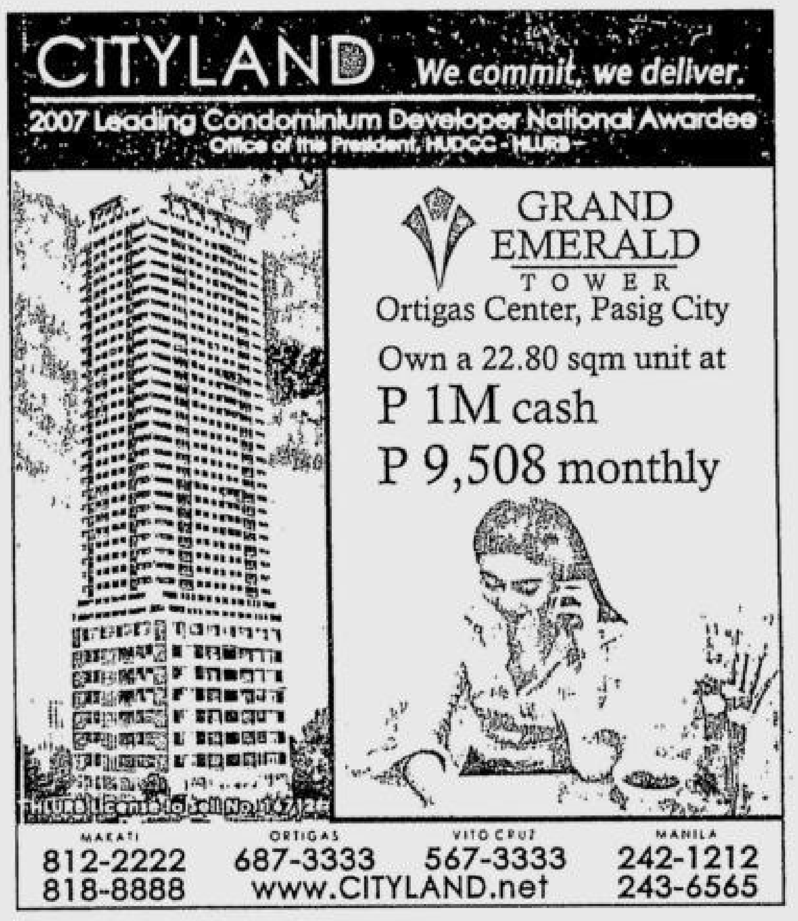
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World ...

From page A1

so left for Burma on Sunday to convey international concerns over a deadly crackdown on antigovernment protests, while hundreds of Burmese nationals and activists staged demonstrations in Japan and South Korea.

Ibrahim Gambari, special envoy of the United Nations, went to the remote bunker-like capital Naypyitaw on Saturday to meet with the junta and stayed overnight, diplomats said.

On Sunday, Gambari returned to Rangoon (Yangon) and was whisked off to the State Guest House to meet Suu Kyi, who was brought out of house arrest to see the UN envoy in what appeared to be an unexpected concession by the junta.

The meeting with Suu Kyi lasted about 90 minutes, said the diplomats, who spoke on condition of anonymity citing protocol. Details of the meeting were not immediately known.

"I am following with great trepidation the very serious events," the Pontiff said during an appearance to pilgrims at his summer residence near Rome.

"I want to express my spiritual closeness to the dear population in this moment of the very painful trial it is going through," he added.

Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka was scheduled to arrive in Rangoon on Sunday evening. Meetings were being arranged between Yabunaka and Burma's Foreign Minister Nyan Win and Home Affairs Minister Maj. Gen. Maung Oo.

Japanese officials have said that Yabunaka planned to protest the death of Japanese journalist Kenji Nagai, who was killed in Rangoon on Thursday when soldiers fired automatic weapons into a crowd of demonstrators.

Diplomatic efforts

The flurry of diplomatic efforts came after the military government launched a bloody crackdown last week on demonstrations that began on Aug. 19 to protest a sharp increase in fuel prices.

The protests drew international attention after thousands of Buddhist monks joined the people in venting anger at decades of brutal military rule. At the height of the protests, some 100,000 people turned out.

The junta, which has a long history of snuffing out dissent, launched a crackdown on Wednesday and Thursday, opening fire into a crowd of peaceful protesters and arresting scores. Though the official death toll is 10, foreign diplomats, dissident groups say the number is likely much higher.

Despite Gambari's meetings, it was not clear how much influence the junta will allow the UN envoy to exert on Burma's affairs.

The United Nations has repeatedly failed to bring about a reconciliation between the military government and the prodemocracy opposition. Gambari and his predecessor, Razali Ismail of Malaysia, have also failed to secure freedom for Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel Peace prize winner who has come to symbolize the struggle for democracy in Burma.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party won the 1990 general elections, which the junta called after crushing a much larger prodemocracy movement in 1988. But the party was never allowed to take power, and many of its top members were jailed. Suu Kyi has spent 12 of the last 18 years under house arrest.

20,000 troops in Rangoon

On Sunday, the number of troops in Rangoon, Burma's largest city, swelled to about 20,000 after reinforcements arrived overnight, ensuring that almost all demonstrators would remain off the streets, another Asian diplomat said on condition of anonymity.

"The security forces are demonstrating their strength," the diplomat said. "I think the chance of protesters coming to the road and mobilizing enough people to topple the junta is zero."

A few monks were seen in a neighborhood on their customary morning round for alms.

"We are not going to protest any more. Rather we will conduct peaceful protests. We Buddhists believe that dhamma (Buddha's teachings) will finally win over evil," said one monk.

People suspected of leading or organizing this week's rallies continue to be arrested, the Asian diplomat said, estimating the total number could be as high as 1,000 including several prominent members of the NLD. They joined an estimated 1,100 other political detainees who have languished in jails since before the current turmoil began.

Int'l reaction

The crackdown has triggered an unprecedented verbal flaying of Burma's generals from almost every corner of the world—even some criticism from No. 1 ally China, which said it was "very much concerned about the current situation."

China urged the ruling junta to "exercise restraint and use peaceful means to restore its stability as soon as possible."

Many people see China, Burma's biggest trading partner, as the most likely outside catalyst for change. *AP*

SHAN villagers in a remote region in eastern Burma along the border with Thailand protest against Burma's military rulers in this photo released by the Free Burma Rangers last week.

AP

Burma protest movement has not been smothered

From page A1

newspapers around the globe shattered the euphoria that another bloodless people power might be putting an end to 45 years of military dictatorship.

The democracy campaign took a bloody turn on Friday when soldiers charged into crowds near Sule Pagoda, the focus of more than a week of protests that started on Aug. 15 when the military junta decided to double the price of gasoline and diesel, while the price of liquefied gas, which fuels buses, went up fivefold. These unexpected increases in the cost of living triggered protests from the people who have long endured economic hardships.

The protests were at first small but grew when the Buddhist monks demonstrated peacefully to support the movement. Troops were sent out to break up the protests in which some monks were injured, bringing more monks from their monastery to the streets.

Political turn

The protests took a political turn late last week when a group of monks and lay people marched through the barricades blocking the road to the home of Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the opposition who has spent 12 of the past 18 months under house arrest.

The demonstrations swelled up to 100,000 toward the weekend, and the crowd escalated their economic demands to calls that the demonstrations would not stop until the junta stepped down.

On Saturday, as the crowds became more defiant, soldiers warned the protesters to vacate public places or be shot within 10 minutes. The protesters chanted, "Give us freedom! Give us freedom!"

Then the troops charged into the crowds and fired at them. Diplomats said many more were killed than the official count of 13. Troops raided monasteries and arrested monks.

The monks are revered in Burma more than the priests and nuns in Catholic Philippines, who actively led the People power movement in 1986.

Worst crackdown since 1988

The crackdown was the worst since the massacre in 1988, when political unrest broke out after Gen. Ne Win, the ruler then, had suddenly cancelled in 1987 certain currency notes, wiping out savings of the people, and compounding years of economic mismanagement.

Protests over the mounting economic crisis were started by Burmese students.

In March 1988, students protesting in Rangoon clashed with the military, and a student was shot dead. The death triggered further protests as the students were joined by ordinary citizens and monks.

In August 1988, hundreds of thousands people joined the protests across the country. Ne Win subsequently resigned as party leader but warned that "when the army shoots, it shoots straight." In September, events proved Ne Win right. Soldiers sprayed automatic rifle fire into the crowds. Human rights groups say at least 3,000 people were killed. A junta took power.

The current junta, led by Gen. Than Shwe, is no less ruthless than Ne Win. His junta proved this in the crackdown on the last week's protests.

Didn't lose nerve

The Burmese junta also did not lose its nerve in the crackdown.

Marcos' military blinked when confronted by the civilian mass blocking the tanks moving toward Camp Crame to crush the military rebellion that dug in there. The mutiny at Camp Aguinaldo had opened up cracks in the Marcos military.

Some Marcos military commanders disobeyed his orders to move to Crame when confronted by the civilian mass mobilized by the Catholic Church hierarchy. Marcos wavered, fearing that if the tanks fired on the Edsa mass, he would provoke a massacre branding him as the butcher of his people.

Besides, Washington had warned Marcos not to use violence. Also, he had uncovered a coup plot by the Reform the Armed Forces Movement, showing fissures in the military command. Marcos was gravely ill from lupus.

Gen. Than Shwe is rumored to be suffering from cancer and receiving treatment in Singapore, which has been supplying his regime military technology and has substantial business relations with Burma.

Condemnation

The crackdown has provoked widespread condemnation from the Western democracies, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), and appeals for restraint from Japan, India, Russia and China, all of which have extensive economic relations with Burma.

Economic sanctions announced by the United States and Britain have little impact on restraining Burma from repression on the democracy movement. The punitive measures cannot work because Burma's ties with its economic partners provide it with a counter to the sanctions from the United States and Britain.

The junta scorns Asean, of which Burma is a member, because of Asean's policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of its members. With all this rhetoric of outrage over the crackdown, international pressure is of little help to the Burmese heroic democracy movement that has been demoralized by the crackdown.

There are reports that the protest movement is looking for cracks in the unity of the junta. Resistance has not been smothered. It is growing and fueling rage among the brutalized people and the monks.

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Talk to media, Army chief advises commanders

ZAMBOANGA CITY—DEVIATING from the usually tight-lipped military culture, Army chief Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano has encouraged his field commanders to "engage the media" and take a proactive public relations stance. This would not only avoid misinformation, but it would show the more humane side of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, he said.

Yano gave the go-signal for the commanders to make themselves more accessible to the media during a recent visit to the 1st Infantry Division in Pulakan, Zamboanga del Sur, and the 102nd Infantry Battalion in Ipil, Zamboanga del Norte.

"Engage the media when they ask for interviews. It's better if they get it straight from the horse's mouth, especially when they need details about encounters and battles," he said in a briefing with his commanders.

Yano said when officers refuses to comment, the media resorts to interviewing unauthorized sources which leads to misinformation.

"Talk about your areas, your missions. But not about ZTE or the National Broadband Network project, although I myself have been asked about it," he said, stressing that the military should not meddle in the country's political affairs.

Yano said field commanders should also "talk about the military's non-traditional projects" like disaster relief and other civic projects that help win the hearts and minds of the people.

He said commanders could speak in forums for the public to know and better understand the Armed Forces.

"Be very active. You represent the organization. You are the face of the organization," Yano told the commanders. "Convey a positive image to the public. [Tell them about] the good things we are doing, otherwise our efforts will go to waste."

Yano, however, did not say if the commanders could comment on, or discuss, soldiers' grievances, problems in their units or in the Armed Forces.

Nikko Dizon

Other fights distracting Army from war with Reds

THE PHILIPPINE ARMY, STRETCHED BY skirmishes with Muslim separatist groups, is falling behind in its aim to wipe out the communist insurgency before the end of President Macapagal-Arroyo's term in 2010, according to Maj. Gen. Jogy Leo Fojas, head of military operations.

Fojas, in a radio interview yesterday, said the Army had failed to meet its half-year target in the campaign against the communist New People's Army (NPA).

"As of the first semester 2007, we have only dismantled three guerrilla fronts," Fojas said. "Our target for the whole of 2007 was 18 guerrilla fronts. Our field commanders are still doing their best to meet the target."

Fojas gave no reason for missing the target, but an intelligence official told Reuters that security forces had been sidetracked by the elections last May, as well as by efforts to hunt down Islamic militants in the South.

"Our troops are thinly spread across the archipelago and we moved so many resources to address the more immediate threat posed by Islamic militants from the Abu Sayyaf," said the senior intelligence official, who asked not to be identified.

"We were too busy putting out fires here and there in the first half of the year, but we've really not neglected the communists. In some cases, the rebels just took advantage of the vacuum left by the movement of our forces," he said.

'Bantay Laya II'

Fojas said military field commanders had made commitments to redouble their efforts. He cited the latest military intelligence estimates showing that the NPA strength had fallen to about 6,300 fighters at the end of June, down 900 from the end of 2006.

"We've made some significant gains but we're pushing our commanders in the field to do more to meet our goal of strategically defeating the communist insurgency by 2010 based on our campaign plan," Fojas said.

Under its counterinsurgency plan, codenamed "Bantay Laya II" (Guard Freedom II), the military aims to dismantle about 80 percent of the 100 NPA guerrilla fronts in 69 of 81 provinces arcoss the country.

About 18 guerrilla fronts were targeted for dismantling this year and the remaining 62 rebel bases to be destroyed between January 2008 and June 2010.

Since 1969, more than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict, one of the longest Maoist-led rebellions in Asia.

A senior general said yesterday the Philippines was buying 10 second-hand UH-1H helicopters for $8.8 million from Singapore next year to beef up its depleted fleet.

"We're really short of helicopters. We only have 41 helicopters in flying condition but, ideally, we should have 100 aircraft to perform our mission," said Maj. Gen. Pedro Ike Inserto, the Air Force vice commander.

Reuters

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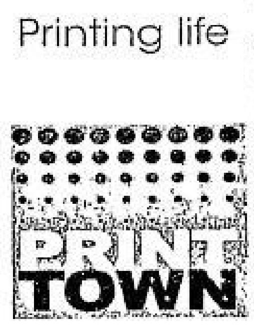
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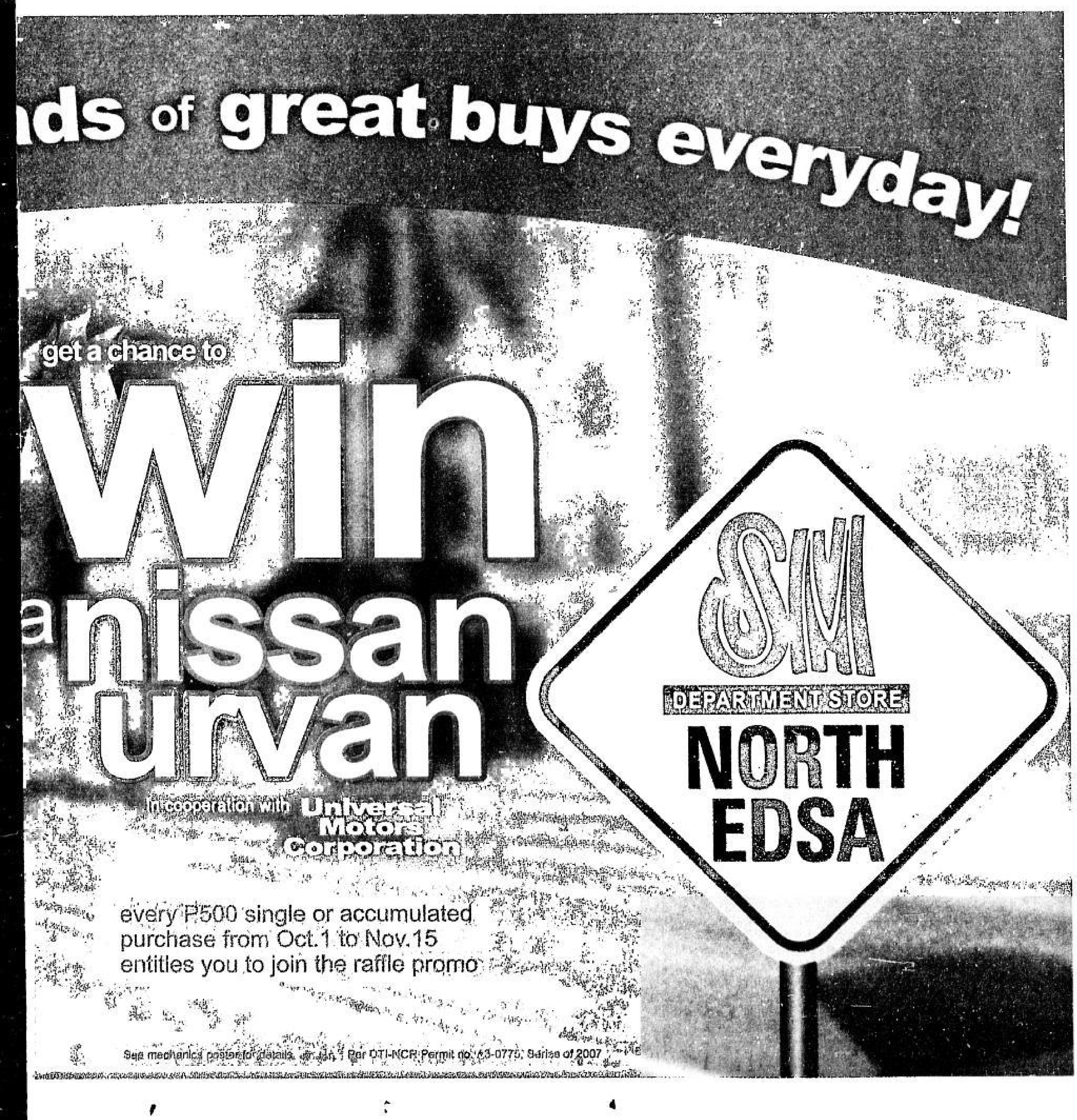
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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, October 1, 2007
26th Week in Ordinary Time
Thérèse of the Child Jesus

1st Reading:	**Zec 8:1-8**
Gospel:	**Luke 9:46-50**

One day the disciples were arguing about which of them was the most important. But Jesus knew their thoughts, so he took a little child and stood him by his side. Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me. And listen: the one who is found to be the least among you all, is the one who is the greatest."

Then John spoke up, "Master, we saw someone who drove out demons by calling upon your name, and we tried to forbid him because he doesn't follow you with us." But Jesus said, "Don't forbid him. He who is not against you is for you."

Commentary

God speaks of returning to Jerusalem. God wants the people he loves to be his faithful city, like the mountain of God where the law was given and where the covenant was proclaimed and accepted. A remnant of the people will be brought home, for nothing is impossible for God. The people will be rescued and they will be brought back from all the places of exile. God will take them back closely to himself again.

Jesus seeks to draw all people especially those who claim to be his own. He takes a little child into their midst and says, "Welcome this child and you welcome me and the One who sent me. The least among you is the greatest." The child in Jesus' time had no power. Children were seen as slaves, with no rights. Some were loved but many were not—they were like outsiders, outcasts, the ill, all who had disobeyed the law (not until they became adults at 12 did they figure into the community). Jesus tells us that all these are the ones we are to welcome, to place in our midst as honored and blest. Do we?

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Protect us

EDITORIAL

LAST WEEK, WHILE THE COUNTRY WAS ABsorbed in the latest twists of the National Broadband Network telenovela, the Supreme Court issued the Rule on the Writ of Amparo. The new package of protections will become effective on Oct. 24—just a little over three months after the high court convened an extraordinary "national consultative summit" on political killings and politically motivated disappearances.

This is, in truth, remarkable. The pace of judicial innovation is virtually unprecedented, a reflection of the judiciary's sense of urgency over the crisis of political violence that continues to disturb the country. At the same time, it cannot be said that the high court threw all caution to the wind; a study of the process and the Rule it produced soothes our concerns. The court made haste, but slowly.

Patterned after a legal remedy born out of the constitutional struggles of Latin American democracies, the writ takes its name after the Spanish "amparar," meaning "to protect." But as the Supreme Court itself took pains to point out, the scope of protection offered by the Philippine writ is wider than those it had been modeled after.

"The petition for a writ of amparo," Section 1 of the new Rule states, "is a remedy available to any person whose right to life, liberty and security is violated or threatened with violation by an unlawful act or omission of a public official or employee, or of a private individual or entity."

Under the writ, the family of, say, a peasant leader believed to have been abducted by a military unit or a private army can petition the judiciary to compel the unit or the private group to undergo a legal undertaking that will force them to account for their actions. No more blanket denials. As the last provision of Section 9 declares: "A general denial of the allegations in the petition shall not be allowed."

Some concerns have been raised, about the new Rule's seeming lack of sympathy for or even outright hostility to public officials, in particular the members of the country's armed services. We understand these concerns, but we cannot agree with the view they reflect, because it is based on a lack of understanding of the dual nature of all laws.

The Constitution itself bears witness to this duality. It grants enormous powers to the government and its instrumentalities; at the same time, it grants ample protection to the citizenry, precisely against the possibility of governmental intervention. What, for instance, is the Bill of Rights, if not the primary package of protections for citizens, citizens who may need to fight either the encroachments or the blandishments of the State?

The new Rule, therefore, does not discriminate against public authorities; instead, it recognizes the dignity of their office as well as the nature of public service. Thus, the standard the new Rule requires of public officials or employees, that they must render "extraordinary diligence" in performing their duties (contrasted with the "ordinary diligence" required of private persons), is not an added burden—it is a necessary corollary of their work.

The new Rule also includes four virtually new legal remedies: the temporary protection order, the inspection order, the production order and the witness protection order. Together, they make the new Rule a true landmark—one that entirely alters the legal landscape.

To be sure, some infelicities or imprecisions have found their way into the new Rule. The second provision of Section 1, which states that "The writ shall cover extralegal killings and enforced disappearances or threats thereof," raises the question whether coverage here is meant exclusively—thus narrowing the scope of the writ (as outlined in the fourth paragraph of this editorial, above).

Section 5 requires the petitioner to provide "The name and personal circumstances of the respondent responsible for the threat, act or omission"—an unfortunate phrasing that may be understood to mean that the respondent **perceived to be** responsible and the person actually responsible are the same.

Section 16, which punishes respondents who fail to respond to the writ, is vague on the actual penalty.

But taken all together, and in the light of key provisions that, for instance, waive docket fees and allow the filing of a petition "on any day and at any time," the new Rule gives actual and potential victims of political violence both legal relief and real hope.

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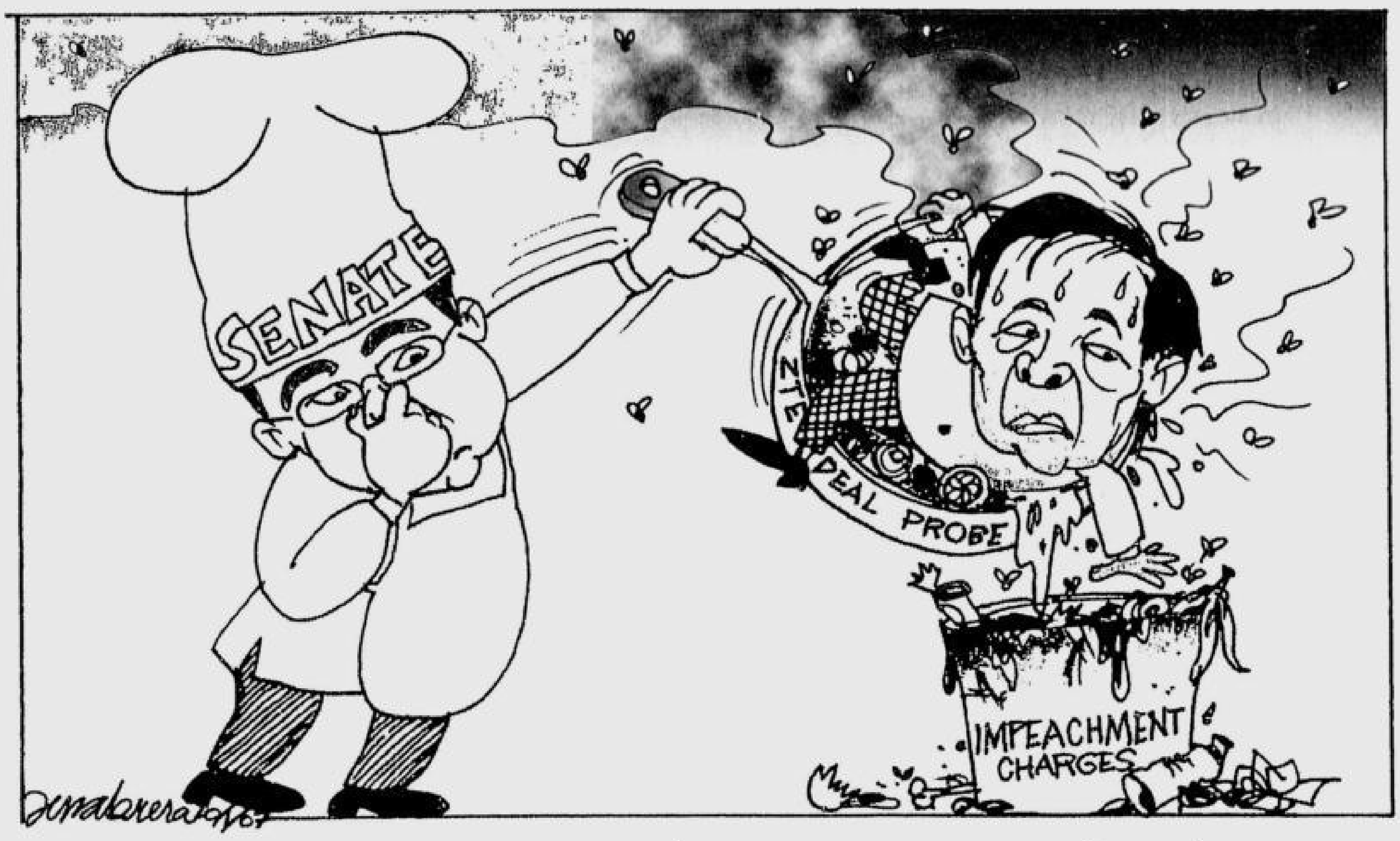


The Ynares-Santiago decision on QC land case

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE BIG CONTROVERSY IN THE JUDICIARY at present is the alleged P10-million bribery attempt on a justice of the Supreme Court. That justice was subsequently identified as Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, who denied the alleged bribery and asked for an investigation to prove her innocence. A later news report said Justice Santiago is handling a big land case in Quezon City.

I went to the Supreme Court and got a copy of a decision on a land case in Quezon City whose *ponente* is Justice Santiago. I am not saying that this is the land case in question but it could be it. It is about the ownership of a big tract of prime land in Matandang Balara, between Ayala Heights and the Capitol Golf course and the compound of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

The contending parties are the heirs of Severino Manotok and the heirs of Homer L. Barque. Considering its location and size, the property is worth billions of pesos. The property was awarded to the Barque heirs. The Manotok heirs appealed to the Court of Appeals and later to the Supreme Court, both of which affirmed that the title of the Barques was genuine and that of the Manotoks spurious. The Quezon City Register of Deeds was ordered to cancel TCT No. RT-22481 of the Manotoks and the Land Registration Authority to reconstitute TCT No. T-210177 of the Barques.

The Supreme Court decision penned by Justice Santiago and concurred in by the other justices of the first division (Chief Justice Hilario Davide and Associate Justices Leonardo Quisumbing and Adolfo Azcuna; Justice Antonio Carpio dissented) was issued on Dec. 12, 2005 and became final and executory on May 2, 2006.

Recently, however, the Manotoks, one of whose counsels was retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Florentino Feliciano, was able to have the Supreme Court accept a petition for the reopening of the case and remanding it to the Regional Trial Court for further proceedings, in spite of the lapse of almost two years and the decision having become final and executory. It is this issue that is now upsetting not only the high court but also the whole judicial system.

How did this come about? The problem started in 1988 when fire gutted the Quezon City Hall, including the Office of the Register of Deeds of Quezon City and thousands of land titles. One of the titles burned was TCT 210177 of the Barques, who filed a petition for reconstitution of their title with the LRA.

However, they found out that the Manotoks already have an administratively reconstituted title, TCT RT-22481. The Manotoks opposed the petition for reconstitution of the Barques, claiming that the lot covered by the title under reconstitution forms part of the land covered by their own reconstituted title, and alleging that TCT 210177 is spurious.

But the LRA ruled that "based on the documents presented, petitioners have established by clear and convincing evidence that TCT 210177 was, at the time of the destruction thereof, valid, genuine, authentic and effective."

It ordered that the reconstitution of TCT 210177 in the name of Homer L. Barque Sr. be given due course. However, notwithstanding its conclusion that the title of the Manotoks was fraudulently reconstituted, the LRA said it is only the Regional Trial Court which can declare that the same was indeed fraudulently reconstituted, and that the Barque title can be reconstituted only after a judicial declaration that the Manotok title was void and therefore should be cancelled.

The litigants went to the Court of Appeals which affirmed the LRA resolution. The Barques filed a motion for reconsideration. On Sept. 7, 2003, the Court of Appeals reconsidered its earlier decision and ordered the Quezon City Register of Deeds to cancel TCT RT-22481 and the LRA to reconstitute TCT 210177.

The Manotoks appealed to the Supreme Court. They contend that (a) the LRA has no authority to annul their title; (b) the reconstitution of the Barques' title would be a collateral attack on their existing title; (c) they were not given the opportunity to be heard; (d) the Court of Appeals, in resolving the appeal from the LRA, has no jurisdiction to order the cancellation of their title; and (e) the ruling on Ortigas vs. Velasco was misapplied.

The Supreme Court denied the Manotok petitions.

The Supreme Court declared that the "LRA has jurisdiction to act on petitions for reconstitution… (and) can properly deliberate on the validity of the titles submitted for reconstitution. Logically, it can declare a title as sham or spurious, or valid on its face."

The Supreme Court also declared: "There is no basis in the allegation that the [Manotoks] were deprived of 'their property' without due process of law when the Court of Appeals ordered the cancellation of their Torrens title, even without a direct proceeding in the RTC … By opposing the petition for reconstitution and submitting their administratively reconstituted title, [the Manotoks] have acquiesced to the authority and jurisdiction of the reconstituting officer, the LRA and the Court of Appeals, and recognized their authority to pass judgment on their title."

The tribunal added: "The reconstitution would not constitute a collateral attack on the [Manotok] title which was irregularly and illegally issued in the first place…. Titles secured through fraud and misrepresentation cannot be the source of legitimate rights and benefits."

The Supreme Court concluded: "It would be needlessly circuitous to remand the case to the RTC to determine anew which of the two titles is sham or spurious and thereafter appeal the trial court's ruling to the Court of Appeals … The remand of a case or an issue to the lower court for further reception of evidence is not necessary where the Court is in position to resolve the dispute based on the records before it and particularly where the ends of justice would not be subserved by the remand thereof."

'Tinimbang ka pa rin'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'LL GIVE THE BEST PERFORMANCE AWARD in the Senate hearing last week to Mar Roxas. He didn't just ask the right questions, he showed the right reaction to perfidy.

I too was bowled over by Romulo Neri's testimony at the Senate, but not in the way he advertised it beforehand. His revelation about Benjamin Abalos trying to bribe him was of course eye-popping enough in itself. "Sec, *may 200 ka dito*" ranks up there with the most nefarious quotable quotes in this country, along with "So will I still win by one million?" and "What are we in power for?" I'm surprised nobody has yet made a T-shirt out of it.

Abalos of course denied it, but he never came close to showing why the Neda chief would put his life and career at risk by lying about something like that. Indeed, as Richard Gordon dredged up during his turn, Abalos has a nasty habit of getting into projects costing the taxpayer billions of pesos that end up being scrapped by the Supreme Court for being anomalous. Gordon did not call Abalos a liar and thief to his face, but he might as well have done so.

But eye-popping as that is, that was not what bowled me over in last week's hearings. What did was Neri's own reaction to his revelation.

Upon Roxas' questioning, Neri said: One, there was no doubt in his mind Abalos tried to bribe him with P200 million. Two, he did not rebuke Abalos, etiquette dictating it as the Comelec chief was his host—the bureaucracy "has its own way of doing things." Three, he was however bothered by Abalos' overtures enough to report it to his (not our) President. Four, his President did nothing about it, and so the project went on and ended up in his lap. Five, he approved it anyway—he would not say if at the behest of his President or not on grounds of "executive privilege." Six, he did so despite the actual offer of bribe to him and possible bribes to other officials because the ZTE project still seemed feasible, he figured the bribes would come from the "profit margin" expected from the project. Seven, the solution to all this is to openly bid out the project.

Roxas could only expostulate while groping for words that he was shocked by Neri's blithe attitude toward wrongdoing. I share his sentiments completely. There and then, you see the vicious stupidities that have taken hold of this country.

At the very least, Neri's argument reminds me of the one that says that even if GMA stole votes with Garci's help, she "probably won anyway" and deserved to be President. It's the same logic: Even though the ZTE project was weighed down by bribes, it was probably still feasible and deserved to push through. Can anything be more viciously stupid or nastily insane? You catch a student cheating in the final exams, you do not ask if he probably passed notwithstanding the cheating, you void his exam and expel him. You catch a President cheating in elections, you do not ask whether she probably won notwithstanding the cheating, you void the results and throw her in jail. You catch the proponents of a project offering bribes, you do not ask if the project remains feasible notwithstanding the bribes, you void the project and throw the bribers in jail.

Cheating in exams, stealing the vote and bribing an official are crimes in and of themselves and void whatever springs from them. Have we become a race of moral cretins we can no longer see that? Have we become a race of the damned we settle for salvaging what we can from what is wrong rather than demanding what is right? That is clearly what the Neda chief has become. That is clearly what his boss has, well, always been.

At the very most, there we go with that "let's move on" attitude again, which has become the biggest bane of this country. What is Neri's solution to the problem? It is to make everything disappear, including the fact that his boss did absolutely nothing after he reported a gross malefaction to her, and very probably did absolutely everything to make it prosper—which was why he had to approve the project anyway—by simply opening broadband to bidding. Do we recognize the pattern? Didn't GMA's people say exactly the same thing a couple of years ago, let's forget that someone stole the presidency, *tapos na 'yan*, let's move on, let's just make sure it doesn't happen again—by Charter Change?

As life, history and common sense show, there is only one way to stop a crime from happening again: That is by punishing the criminal. A bribe is a crime, whether it is 200 million pesos or two hundred centavos. Hell, it is a crime whether it is 200 centavos or 200 *tansan*, and whether the *tansan* carry the offer of "Free Coke" or not. You want to stop something like ZTE from happening again, punish the Comelec chief who offered the bribe, the President who condoned the bribe (for reasons that owe to owing the Comelec chief for past crimes), and the government officials who helped make the bribe prosper—including the Neda chief, while taking into account his (partial) efforts to make amends.

I am **not** inappreciative of what Neri has done, which is to reject Abalos' bribe and go on to expose it. It is not every day we see someone spurning a fortune, which lives up to the Christian injunction that it does not profit a man if he gains P200 million but loses his soul. But that doesn't make up for the things he has done (or not done) and said (or not said).

At one point in the hearings, Panfilo Lacson asked him if, by refusing to talk about what his boss wanted done with ZTE, Neri wasn't missing a historic opportunity to show his true worth. Neri replied: "I will be the judge of that."

What can I say? Nope, you won't. The public will.

Tinimbang ka, ngunit kulang. You were judged and found—abject.

A 'religion of secrecy'

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

"I WAS STRUCK DUMB WITH ASTONISHMENT at the sentiments . . . [t]hat the executive alone shall have the right of judging what shall be kept secret, and what shall be made public, and that the representatives of a free people, are incompetent to determine on the interests of those who delegated them." —Benjamin Franklin.

"Bureaucracy naturally welcomes a poorly informed and hence a powerless parliament—at least in so far as ignorance somehow agrees with the bureaucracy's interests." —Max Weber

Ironically, three months before Watergate, US President Richard M. Nixon had this quote: "[W]hen information which properly belongs to the public is systematically withheld by those in power, the people soon become ignorant of their own affairs, distrustful of those who manage them, and—eventually—incapable of determining their own destinies."

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote in his "The Imperial Presidency": a "religion of secrecy" serves as an "all-purpose means by which the American Presidency [may] dissemble its purposes, bury its mistakes, manipulate its citizens, and maximize its power."

This, apparently, is the model for Secretary Romulo Neri's appeal to executive privilege.

But is executive privilege without constitutional foundation? This was the view of Raul Berger in his book "Executive Privilege: a Constitutional Myth." Most scholars together with the US and Philippine Supreme Court do not agree with Berger.

Indeed, executive privilege did not yet have that name when Washington denied a congressional request for presidential material regarding the failure of a 1791 military expedition by Gen. Arthur St. Clair against American Indians.

Thomas Jefferson withheld correspondence deemed secret from both the public and Congress.

So did James Madison and later President Monroe and much later Eisenhower.

Early Presidents all recognized that executive privilege occasionally was necessary for the effective discharge of the President's duties. But it was not until the Nixon presidency that the US Supreme Court officially baptized presidential secrecy with a name. The Court recognized the necessity for the President to be able to consult with his advisers without fear of public disclosure of their advice. Averell Harriman expressed it well: "[T]he President is entitled to receive the frank views of his advisers and therefore must be able to protect the personal or confidential nature of their communications with him." So did William P. Bundy: "[I]f officers of an administration should come to feel that their confidential advice would be disclosed, short of a period of many years, I do believe that the consequences in terms of honesty, candor, courage and frankness within the executive branch could be very serious indeed."

In United States v. Nixon, the Supreme Court agreed: "The valid need for protection of communications between high government officials and those who advise and assist them in the performance of their manifold duties ... is too plain to require further discussion. Human experience teaches that those who expect public dissemination of their remarks may well temper candor with a concern for appearances and for their own interests to the detriment of the decision making process.... [T]he confidentiality of Presidential communications has ... constitutional underpinnings.... The privilege is fundamental to the operation of Government and inextricably rooted in the separation of powers under the Constitution."

Like any good thing, however, executive privilege can be misused and abused. It has been. Observers give numerous examples, especially after the post-Watergate period. As one scholar noted, such examples give executive privilege a bad reputation. For this reason Presidents Ford, Carter and the older Bush avoided using the words executive privilege and protected secrecy through other means.

The current administration's aggressive use of executive privilege through EO 464 calls for a serious examination of the legitimacy of its uses. No amount of exorcism, however, will drive away executive privilege. After all, it has its legitimate place. What is needed is a proper balance. Toward this end there are certain basic guidelines that must be kept in mind.

First, in a constitutional regime that is predicated on official accountability, executive privilege must be the exception and executive transparency the rule.

Second, since executive privilege is not an unfettered power, Congress has the right and sometimes the duty to challenge presidential claims of privilege. This is especially true when the presidential claim is not based on the need to protect national security or to protect the privacy of Cabinet deliberations when needed in the public interest.

Third, both sides of the debate must recognize that there are no precise boundary lines that divide transparency and secrecy. The precise demarcation lines cannot be determined in advance. The lines must be determined through the political dynamics of separation of powers. In the end, the Court must draw the line, if need be, after an *in camera* hearing.

For that matter, the limits on the often abused power of legislative inquiry in aid of legislation or the oversight function of Congress are not clear either.

It is in this light that we should measure what is expected of Neri. But my sense is that he is hiding something that is illicit and explosive. If the controversy turns out to be a case of an irresistible force facing an immovable wall, Congress is not without weapons to batter the wall. Aside from its subpoena and contempt powers, Congress can also withhold support for the presidential agenda or tighten its control of government purse strings. The ultimate weapon, of course, is impeachment, or the threat thereof.

Repression and democracy deficit in Burma

COMMENTARY

Roland G. Simbulan

THIS IS THE TIME FOR THE INTERNATIONAL community, the people and governments of the world especially those in Asean, to extend their solidarity for the people of Burma (Myanmar). This is a critical time to extend their globalized solidarity for the struggling people at the hour of their need. The military junta of Burma—calling itself the "State Peace and Development Council" (SPDC)—which has ruled this country for more than four decades is again trying to violently crack down on non-violent protests. In 1988, an estimated 3,000 people peacefully protesting the junta's policies were butchered on the streets of Rangoon (Yangon).

The protests in the streets in the last two weeks or so have been led by Buddhist monks in many parts of Burma. They have been sparked by the 500-percent increase in fuel prices overnight, affecting the price of essential commodities and public transport. The skyrocketing fuel prices are said to be part of the military junta's economic and financial reform program, coinciding with the high-level mission to Burma by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The Burmese military rulers led by Gen. Than Shwe want to privatize the national fuel distribution system and to sell the retail outlets to a private company, probably Tay Za and his Htoo Trading Group. Fuel state subsidies would have to be removed to make the business profitable, destroy the black market and deliver a monopoly.

These recent economic policies have caused great hardship for the Burmese people who are not even allowed to complain by the military rulers, sparking nationwide marches and protests led by the traditionally non-political Buddhist monks. And there is no institutionalized check and balance to the economic mismanagement of the junta. More than 100,000 protestors in a muffled nation of 42,642,000 people have joined the Buddhists in key cities like Rangoon, Mandalay, Mawlamyaing, Bago and Pathein.

Two weeks ago, Asia's thriving and struggling social movements—people's movements, NGOs, indigenous peoples movements and women's movements from more than 20 countries—met in Manila for the World Forum for Democratization in Asia, hosted by the Davao-based Initiatives for International Dialogue. The purpose was to address the issue of "democracy deficit" in various Asian countries, and especially to extend solidarity to the people in repressed "closed societies" like Burma. It was a remarkable expression of "globalization from below," citizens of the world fortifying each other, learning and exercising true international solidarity. Experiences of social movements in the region were shared with each other, including positive and negative lessons.

Social movements come from various degrees of experience and history in their struggles for the democratization of their societies. Some societies, as in Burma, do not allow any kind of space for political and civil liberties; no free press and no independent civil power are tolerated. In the end, we know that ultimately, the subjective forces of the Burmese people—through their consciousness, awareness and organization—will overcome the objective factors (superior force, weapons and technology) of the state apparatus of the repressive Burmese military rulers.

Social movements and states that claim to be democratic must close ranks and extend their full solidarity with the people of Burma who are struggling to be free. Burmese state repression that has been organized and institutionalized with torture, imprisonment, censorship, disappearances and summary executions of dissenters is not unfamiliar to us in the Philippines.

But democracy, as we have learned in the Philippines, is not ultimately about seizing or controlling state power away from repressive regimes. We have seen how our own "democracy" can become so fragile even with the trappings of elections and political parties.

Democracy is about an awakened citizenry at their critical mass, organized and unorganized, that can make their government accountable, transparent and responsive to their needs and aspirations, where the fundamental rights of the people are respected, even for those who are a minority. It is about waking up the consciousness of the people, developing their full potentials as human beings, bringing people together in a true spirit of debate, dialogue, consensus and participation to provoke changes in public and state policy. This is the fundamental deficit in Burma and the people there truly need our solidarity to achieve their democratization. The Burmese military junta's principal backers—China and India, who are its trading partners—and investors must be made to account by the Asean members and international community for the actions of this despotic regime that they supply directly and indirectly with the logistics of repression.

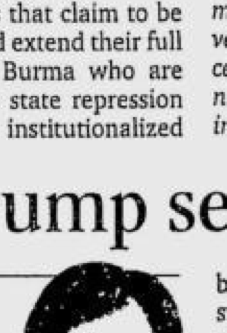
It would be more tragic if at the time of their need, there was a deficit in our solidarity for the resistance and courage of the people of Burma who are, once again, bravely standing up to their despotic military oppressors.

Roland G. Simbulan is full professor in Development Studies and Public Management at the University of the Philippines. He is a former vice chancellor and faculty regent of UP and is currently a senior fellow of the Center for Peoples' Empowerment in Governance (CENPEG).

Should thuggery trump secrecy?

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



WHEN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IS SUMmoned to listen to the Queen's version of the State of the Nation Address, the doors are symbolically slammed in the face of the official tasked with making the summons. He has to tap the doors three times with his staff, is asked who he is, identifies himself, and only then are the doors opened and the MPs file out to go to the House of Lords to listen to the sovereign.

This curious tradition was born of a historic event: on Jan. 4, 1642, King Charles I, having heard that Parliament intended to impeach his queen, entered the House of Commons with his armed guards. He wanted to arrest five MPs as the ringleaders in the attempt to impeach the Queen for treason. The King was reduced to mumbling, "I see the birds have flown."

By affinity, our Congress is an heir to the experiences of older legislatures, and the story of Charles I has come to represent an ever-present threat that executive departments pose to legislative departments the world over. Both the House and Senate have a decorative wooden stick, called the Mace, which is prominently displayed beside the rostrum whenever each chamber is in session. Its origins lie in the medieval weapon of the same name, and represents the exclusive authority of each chamber to secure and police their own members and their respective premises. Countries that govern themselves according to the principle of the separation of powers, have always been fiercely opposed to intrusion by the executive into the workings of the legislature.

Yesterday, this paper headlined an account that just as Romulo Neri was finally going to reveal, in secret session, what he wasn't prepared to say in public, Sen. Joker Arroyo intervened, and made a motion that essentially provided an opening for Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya to enter the picture. At which point, Neri appeared so ill, senators say they decided to call the whole thing off.

Senator Arroyo has angrily denied that he made a motion to bring in Andaya at the point that Neri seemed poised to spill the beans. It seems unlikely to me that Arroyo would do something so crude. When the committees decided to hold an executive session, only the senators, Neri, his lawyer (most definitely not Andaya), and a Blue Ribbon committee lawyer were authorized to attend. In other words Arroyo and the whole world knew that Neri was entitled, and expected, to bring his counsel with him in to the executive session—and that a Cabinet member is prohibited from acting as someone's counsel.

So then how could it be, that the INQUIRER's sources all seem to agree that an executive session limited to a few people, meant to afford Neri the chance to speak freely without fear of intimidation, ended up with a Cabinet member other than Neri not only being there, but who is then alleged to have literally nudged Neri, who then clammed up?

The House and Senate jealously guard access to their session floors, but make exceptions, out of courtesy, to former colleagues, such as Cabinet members who were once congressmen or senators. Hospitality takes many forms and I can only speculate that if Andaya was there, it could have been possible that Andaya was allowed to be present in the executive session, not at some point, but from the very start—as a courtesy. Extended by whom? Only a senator would be so bold. And yet surely, other senators would have objected on the basis of the attendance being highly restricted. The executive session was meant to help Neri, who'd endured hours of tremendous pressure.

Recall that around 12:48 p.m. that day, there was news that Neri was whisked away to the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, on the 4th floor of the Senate. If my recollection of the brief mention of this development is correct, Neri seemed surprised by this as his actual intention had either been to answer the call of nature or have lunch. Reasonable minds must consider that the executive session became the last, but wasn't the first, attempt by the Palace to browbeat Neri into keeping silent. The question now becomes, were senators complicit in the intimidation of a witness by omission or commission?

What was bad enough was the possibility of having Andaya in the room, whether from the start or by barging in. If true, it would have served no other purpose either way but to intimidate Neri. Think of it. I don't even mean to suggest that at any point, Andaya positioned himself across from, or beside, Neri, or even grabbed him by the shoulders or shook him, or poked him, or shouted instructions at him to cease and desist from saying anything: this is the Senate, not the mafia series the Sopranos.

Such scenarios are impossible because surely the senators present, regardless of party affiliations, would have demanded Andaya's immediate expulsion from the premises. Unless we speculate further that the Senate premises actually had members of the PSG, fully armed, lurking in the vicinity. But no self-respecting legislature anywhere in the world would keep silent, vow or no vow, if armed guards other than those under its own sergeant-at-arms, presented a menace to a witness.

No, Andaya's presence alone in the executive session, even if he did nothing at all and didn't nudge Neri, defeated the whole purpose of the executive session. If a Cabinet member, unauthorized to attend, without legal personality to serve as counsel, was either in the meeting from the start or barged in sometime in the middle, then surely the veil of secrecy was lifted. In the face of such an invasion, the Senate, surely, cannot maintain the fiction of a vow of secrecy that was broken from the start.

Or, is the Senate the victim of a charade? Are senators being blamed for being gutless in the face of an intrusion that never took place, and made the bad guys in what might actually be a Punch and Judy act between Neri and Andaya?

Selective courage from resident nerd

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

THIS MORNING, DIRECTOR GENERAL AVELINO "SONNY" Razon takes over as chief of the Philippine National Police. Razon graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1974 and is the last of his class to assume a position of major responsibility among the nation's security forces. His other classmates like incumbent chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Air Force commander Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino and Navy chief Vice Adm. Rogelio Calunsag, start leaving the service early next year.

The Philippine Army is now led by a member of class 1976, Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano. This incoming group of officers represents the future of the Armed Forces. By virtue of his appointment as Army commander, Yano will likely succeed Esperon come February 2008. Perhaps the strongest contender other than Yano would be Lt. Gen. Cardozo Luna, the present chief of Eastern Mindanao Command (EASMINCOM) based in Davao City. Either Yano or Luna would make an excellent chief of staff of the AFP. Both have service reputations of being upright, dedicated professionals. Luna, a member of class of 1975, used to be with the Philippine Constabulary before it was reorganized as the Philippine National Police. He then transferred to the Philippine Army. Lt. Gen Pedrito Cadungog, the present AFP deputy chief of staff looms as the next Air Force commander, while Rear Adm. Emilio Marayag Jr., is a strong contender for Navy flag officer in command.

Which brings me once again to the revolving door arrangements favored by this administration when it comes to the leadership of the armed forces. Even when both the Senate and the House of Representatives passed a bill last November providing for a fixed term for the AFP chief of staff as well as the major service commanders—a reform move supported by former Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz—President Macapagal-Arroyo decided to stick to a practice which flies in the face of common sense management principles. Perhaps it is an indication of a deep sense of insecurity. And this is reflected in the current crisis of confidence and credibility in the wake of the NBN scandal.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines will probably have to wait a bit longer before the light at the end of the tunnel comes into view.

* * *

The NBN Senate hearings continue to hog the limelight in both print and television coverage. Much has already been said and reported. A number of our senators have had their forty seconds of fame, basking under the glare of full publicity. Let me just point out one interesting observation made in the late hours of the Senate hearing which had Chairman Benjamin Abalos and former Neda chief Romulo Neri as star witnesses.

In grilling Secretary Neri on his role in the approval of the broadband project, Sen. Manuel Roxas II used the word "stunning" to describe the current level or standard of morality that seems to be prevalent among public officials today. Roxas pointed out that here was a Cabinet secretary being offered a 200-something bribe to get a project through the paperwork. He reports the matter to the President and advises his staff to be more careful in evaluating the whole thing. He then proceeds to give his imprimatur on the project, sidestepping the bribery attempt and explaining that Neda was mostly concerned with the viability of a project, other details being left to the line agency concerned. He names the bribe-offeror but then invokes "executive privilege" to protect himself from further questioning. Clearly a case of selective courage in the face of the enemy.

Some wise guy suggested that perhaps Neri the nerd thought he was being offered 200 pesos for his caddy since he was in the midst of a golf game with friends and interested parties.

* * *

Incidentally, I have to relate this story for the benefit of Senator Roxas.

When I was a young boy in junior high at St. Mary's College in Honolulu—my father was consul general in Hawaii at that time—I came home one afternoon to find a stranger lying in my bed. I was about to kick his butt and shove him out when my father cautioned me not to disturb the stranger. It turned out to be the young Gerardo Roxas, Mar Roxas' father, who was on his way to the United States for college studies. Just before his plane landed in Honolulu, word reached the Philippine consulate that President Manuel Roxas had died of a heart attack after a speaking engagement at Clark Air Base. It was the sad task of my father to inform Gerry Roxas and that he had to fly back to Manila immediately. He was invited to rest for a few hours at our place while waiting for his return flight. My father was the first press secretary of President Manuel Roxas and was also one of the pioneers of the Philippine Foreign Service, courtesy of Roxas.

* * *

The latest findings by Transparency International (TI) showed that the Philippines had dropped by 10 notches in a survey of perceptions of public sector corruption in 180 countries. The TI report is a composite index of 14 expert opinion surveys. From 121 last year, the Philippines dropped to 131, sharing this slot with Yemen, Burundi, Iran, Honduras and Libya.

While corruption in the country seems to be on the rise, we also have to take notice of high growth rates during the past year. Without questioning government figures on this issue, one way of looking at corruption and high growth rates is the view expressed by Paul Volcker, former chairman of the Federal Reserve and currently head of the World Bank investigation committee on anti-corruption efforts.

In a recent interview in Newsweek, Volcker was asked: "Corruption and high growth rates co-exist in many countries today. Isn't that a sign that we should not overemphasize corruption?" His reply: "It is hard to overemphasize corruption. There is more and more evidence that corruption is an obstacle to growth. That doesn't mean that some countries with particular advantages can't grow with corruption, but they might grow faster without it."

Perhaps, we could grow even faster if we had less of corruption. In our case, that involves leadership by example.

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Before NBN, solve poverty first

LETTERS

I AM AN ELECTRONIC AND Internet freak. I never leave home without my laptop—my American Express card, maybe, but not my laptop. Even when I fly to the Philippines, which I do every other month, I have my computer with me, "connected to my hip." So, I am 100 percent in favor of having a national broadband network for the Philippines—but not at that padded, super-inflated cost of $329 million (when other quality bids are lower) and, more importantly, not before we take care of our poor, homeless and hungry fellow Filipinos who are languishing in total poverty.

How insensitive, uncaring and unfocused our President and our legislators would be to even plan to give our people tuxedos when more than 70 percent of them are clothed mostly in rags. Or, to offer the homeless and the hungry champagne, strawberries and caviar instead of a home, food and education for their children. These are the areas where our national leaders must focus on and spend our tax pesos in, to alleviate this deadly cancer of poverty among our people.

Couples for Christ, among others, and Tony Meloto's Gawad Kalinga are addressing this fundamental issue. Why can't our government concentrate on and address this dilemma more effectively? I know for a fact that the Philippines can eradicate poverty if it wills it. It is not an impossible task. One does not have to be an Einstein or a rocket scientist to do the math.

Our legislators and other government thieves can steal less from the national coffers, for a start, so that the "remaining (unstolen) balance" can be earmarked to help our poor, homeless, hungry, hopeless and destitute *kababayan*. The billions and billions being plundered by corrupt officials can make a big dent on—if not eliminate—poverty, and make it a thing of the past for millions of Filipinos.

And only when those thieves start doing that noble humanitarian task can they legitimately and conscionably consider providing the Filipinos with 21st-century, cutting-edge communications technology—like the National Broadband Network.

I feel very strongly that our government would first satisfy our corrupt National Broad-Bandits Network (NBBN)—aka National Broad-Kurakot Network (NBKN)—before attending to the suffering people of the Philippines.

As I said earlier, I am very much addicted to this great technology and would love to have it in our country. But first things first. Let's set our priorities in order. Let's first eradicate two existing deplorable and embarrassing conditions in our country: the NBBN-NBKN corruption and poverty. Succeeding in these endeavors will finally allow us to regain our honor and dignity as a people and as a nation in the eyes of the world.

God bless the Filipinos. God bless the Philippines.

—PHILIP S. CHUA, M.D.,
scalpelpen@gmail.com

We Filipinos are a confused people

TRULY, THE FILIPINOS ARE A confused people. We have an electoral process that we don't believe in. Instead we believe in rumors and hearsay to topple a duly elected official. We have a justice system but we believe in poll surveys of guilt or innocence. We are Asia's biggest Catholic nation whose bishops and priests promote love and brotherhood, but we thrive on slander, graft and killings.

The widow of an alleged plunderer still flaunts her wealth, while a convicted plunderer taunts the government and insults the justice system. I see endless contradictions. Even our economic policies and agenda are dictated by decisions of non-economic experts like the Supreme Court, media and public opinion. Because of these I am severely frustrated.

I am an engineer and have been dreaming to see our country move forward through genuine industrialization, which is the only way to have a stable economic foundation so that our jobless graduates can get decent jobs. I have been dreaming of the restoration of our dignity as a nation—not as a nation working as slaves and being raped in foreign lands.

I am still hoping that the sacrifices of all the decent and morally upright Filipinos will ultimately bear fruit.

—ROMULO E. VITOR,
re_vitor@yahoo.com

US-based group also pitched in

THIS REFERS TO MY COMMENTary on recent donations to the University of the Philippines from alumni in the United States. ("$1.7 M for UP," INQUIRER, 9/26/07) My attention has been called to the following item as an omission.

The donations also included one in the amount of $10,000 from the UP Centennial Movement in America, which is based in Chicago and headed by alumna Jo Abaya Wee-Sit, a former president of the UP Alumni Association in America.

—BELINDA A. AQUINO,
University of Hawaii at Manoa,
Honolulu, HI 96822

Hustisya para kay CRIS!
JUSTICE
SANGKOT!

AFTER MORE than a month, the search for justice for Cris Anthony Mendez continues. FILE PHOTO

Saguisag on Sigma Rogues and the new writ of amparo

TO NEARLY UNIVERSAL ACclaim, Chief Justice Reynato Puno has taken aggressive steps to stop extrajudicial killings suspected to have been committed by law enforcers from the Philippine Military Academy and Philippine National Police Academy.

But justice should begin at home.

Whether it is *amparo*, *habeas* or whatever, we should use every means to stop the extrajudicial killings in Diliman, in an institution we subsidize, in a university which has produced the Chief Justice and a vast majority of the membership of the Supreme Court.

It has been said that the day we see the truth and cease to speak is the day we begin to die.

Surprisingly, *Manong* Johnny Ponce Enrile has condemned the Sigma Rogues, the barbarians suspected to be behind the death of Cris Anthony Mendez. There is hope for everyone. But Sigma Rogues Edgardo Angara and Franklin Drilon have not been heard from; so is the Commission on Human Rights, which is headed by another UP alum. But too many people have died over the decades. Frank Chavez, where are you?

Indeed, some of the cruelest are told in silence. Two mistakes are inevitable, speaking when it is time to be silent and keeping silent when it is time to speak. These are clichés that have the powerful ring of truth.

UP must not stand for Uncivilized People. If the system cannot solve the killing of Mendez, the Supreme Court may have to stop all this talk about issuing rules on extrajudicial killings elsewhere, but not in Diliman.

Do we need a Habeas Sigma?

It seems the Sigma Rogues concerned have become *desaparecidos*. Maybe they are in Sicily, where criminal syndicates have their R&R, waiting for things to cool off, given our people's notorious lack of moral stamina.

—RAV SAGUISAG,
4045 Bigasan St.,
Palanan, Makati City

Begging Erap to accept pardon: What have we come to?

THE EDITORIAL "PARDON FOR plunderer?" said it all. (INQUIRER, 9/25/07) What has happened to to our leaders' way of thinking? Here is a convicted felon citing his own terms for accepting a pardon.

Why would the administration offer him pardon in the first place? Such an offer is appalling. It seems like we even have to beg him and give back his loot just so he would accept it. Only in the Philippines.

—TONY MUÑOZ,
nongmz@yahoo.com

Pangilinan's questions misconstrued by reader

I WRITE IN RESPONSE TO STEVE Y. VESPEra's Letter to the Editor. (INQUIRER, 9/25/07) Vespera implied that Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan was trying to clear President Macapagal-Arroyo of any involvement in the National Broadband Network scandal through the testimony of Joey de Venecia.

Vespera wrote, "he [Senator Pangilinan] wrapped it up with an assurance from the witness [De Venecia] that the latter had no personal knowledge of the President's complicity in the skullduggery."

Having watched the Senate hearings myself, I believe Vespera misconstrued Pangilinan's line of questioning. If one would revisit the records of the hearing, it was De Venecia and not Pangilinan who volunteered that President Arroyo was not involved in the shady deal. Contrary to Vespera's observation, it was Pangilinan who challenged De Venecia by asking, "But you don't know this for a fact?"

The senator solicited an admission from De Venecia that he did not have personal knowledge of the President's daily dealings with the First Gentleman and Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, and that therefore he was in no position to claim, as he did, that President Arroyo was not involved in the ZTE deal.

We appreciate very much Vespera's concern and vigilance on the ZTE deal, and I hope that this response sets the record straight.

—RENAN B. DALISAY,
chief of staff,
Office of Sen. Francis
"Kiko" Pangilinan,
kiko.pangilinan@gmail.com

Workers' group condemns Burma's military junta

THE FILIPINO WORKING CLASS JOINS THE clamor around the world condemning the violent suppression by the military junta of the protest movement in Burma (Myanmar). We add the voice of the workers in the call for democratization in Burma, freedom for political prisoners and an end to the military rule.

We express our solidarity for the people of Burma, especially our Burmese brother- and sister-workers. Under the heel of the military junta, the working class of Burma suffers as much as, or even more than, other sectors and classes of Burmese society. The Burmese military dictatorship may be a throwback to the Dark Ages; but under its iron-fisted rule, the post-modern paradigm of globalization is being forced down the throats of Burmese workers. Multinational corporations are extracting super profits from the blood and sweat of Burmese workers who are denied the most elementary labor rights by the brutal dictatorship.

The Filipino workers sympathize with the situation of their Burmese brothers and sisters, for we suffered the very same exploitation and abuse under the Marcos dictatorship. In fact, the burgeoning protest movement in Burma against price increases recalls to mind the *welgang bayan* of the '80s and '90s against the economic hardship during and after the Marcos dictatorship.

The Burmese military dictatorship hopes to nip in the bud the protest movement against the economic crisis and scuttle its maturation into a political movement for democracy in their country. But the tables may yet be turned and the bloody repression may still water the seeds of a new uprising against military rule.

Despite the forced isolation of Burma under the dictatorship, international solidarity has a significant role to play in sustaining and strengthening the protest movement in Burma. Thus, the Partido ng Manggagawa will educate and mobilize the Filipino workers as vanguard-fighters for democracy to stand as one body and speak with one voice in support of the Burmese people and workers in their struggle for political freedom and social emancipation.

—JUDY ANN MIRANDA,
secretary general,
Partido ng Manggagawa,
18 Alley 2, Project 6, Quezon City

The 'eightysomethings' must tell their stories

MAY I THANK THE INQUIRER FOR PUBLISHing a feature article about Godofedo Peteza Sr., the "Dear Editor" writer. (INQUIRER, 9/4/07) All "eightysomethings" should be able to read the article. I will have it photocopied and I will send copies to my classmates (Araullo High School Class '39 and Philippine Normal School Class '41).

Every time we have reunions, I always ask them to write about their beefs and complaints instead of just talking and talking about them. It is us, I remind them, that must write about what we really experienced during our youth, how we had to sing the "Star-Spangled Banner" before the Pambansang Awit, how we were punished and made to pay a fine of five centavos every time we were caught speaking Tagalog, how we enjoyed the "haranas" from our gangly swains, how we enjoyed the silent movies with our heroes Tom Mix and Ramon Navarro.

We, still lucid at this venerable age, should be able to write like Peteza. We fled to the hills to escape the Japanese, danced with the GIs during Liberation, rejoiced with our countrymen when we were "granted" (not declared?) independence. We "suffered" martial law (we were part of the generation of 40 million cowards and one SOB), we were able to raise families, educate our children. Some of us allowed them, with heavy hearts, to seek a brighter future in foreign lands.

We should also now be persevering to keep our good old family values and inculcate them in our descendants. Crass materialism, relativism and decadent instant gratification have taken over. We should have many interesting stories to tell.

We, the eightysomethings—and we are still many—must sit down and write now, before it is too late. Before we get the dreaded Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, God forbid.

—CONSUELO D. SISON,
Rotary Club of Loyola Heights,
10 Alpha Rd., Alpha Village,
Capitol Hills Drive, Quezon City

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Bureau takes in P1B

THE BUREAU OF Immigration has collected a "record high" P1.116 billion in fees for the year through August.

"This is only the second time in our history our income surpassed one billion pesos with four months [left] before the end of the year," Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said in a statement.

Libanan said the eight-month take was P21 million, or 23 percent, higher than the BI target of P907.7 million for the period.

"We are seeing the continuing evolution of our bureau into one of the government's prime revenue generating agencies," Libanan said.

He said the sharp rise in income was a result of the steady influx of foreign visitors both for business and pleasure.

"Foreigners are entering our country in droves. This only means our reputation as a favored tourist and investment destination is steadily improving," Libanan said.

He said there had also been a "dramatic upsurge" in the number of foreigners applying for work and investment visas.

BI finance chief Elvira Presado said the bureau's income was highest in January when it totaled P176.4 million, followed by July when it was P163.5 million.

Margaux C. Ortiz

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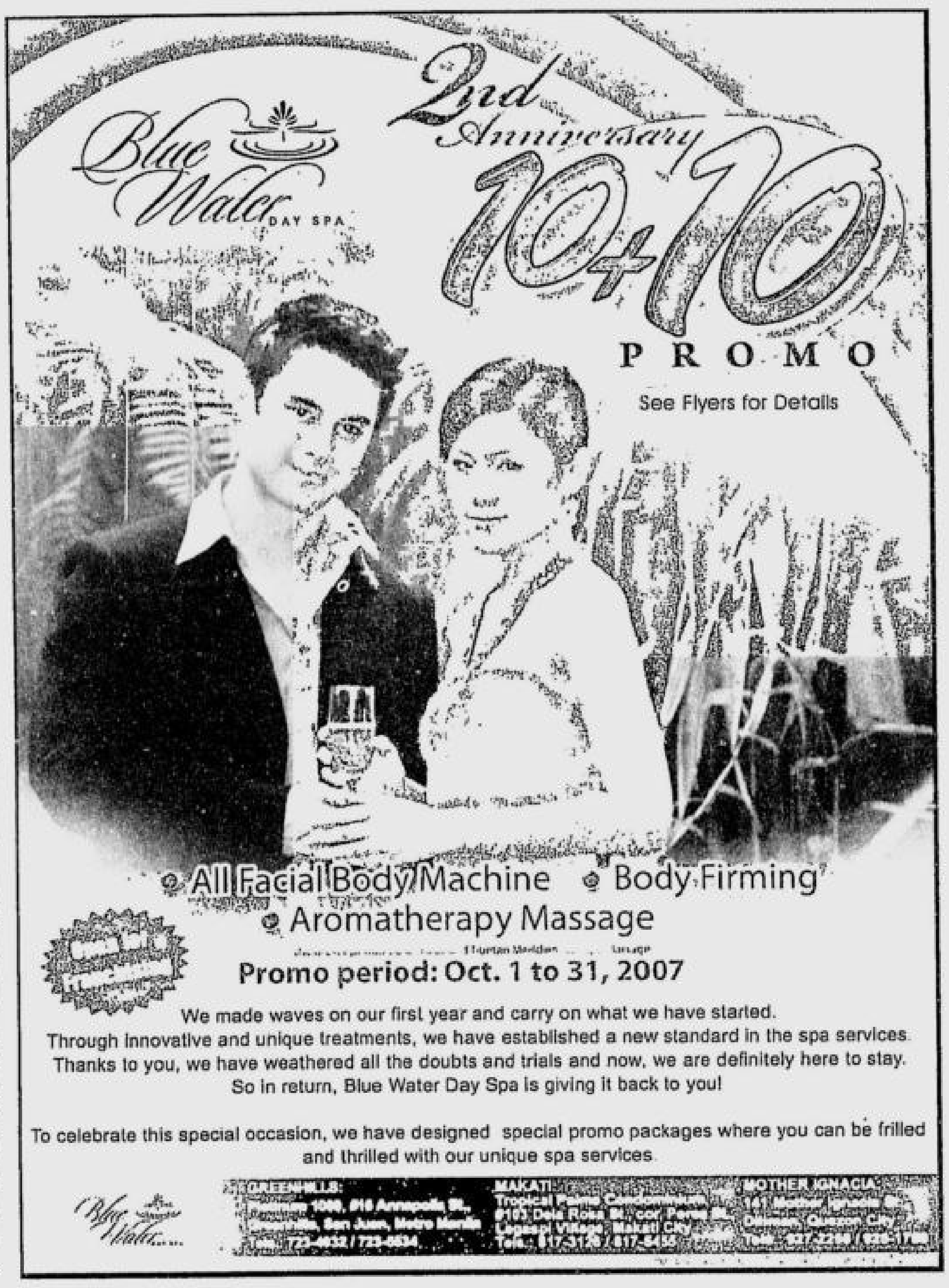

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OCTOBER 11, 2007 (Thursday)

8:00 - 8:30	Registration
8:30 - 8:40	Opening of exhibits
8:40 - 8:50	Philippine National Anthem & Invocation
8:50 - 8:55	Opening Remarks Ruby M. Tamayo VP – Internal and NQF Chairperson
8:55 - 9:00	Introduction of Keynote Speaker Angelica C. Fraginal PSQ President
9:00 - 9:30	Keynote Address: Spreading the Value of Entrepreneurship Jose Ma. A. Concepcion III President & CEO RFM Corporation Presidential Consultant for Entrepreneurship
9:30 - 9:50	Juran Awards Ceremony Fanny N. Villanueva PSQ Vice President – External
9:50 -10:30	Blue Ocean Strategy: Creating New Market Space, Creating New Profit Sources, Breaking Out of Parity Josiah Go Chairman and Chief Marketing Strategist Mansmith and Fielders, Inc.
10:30 -10:50	Break
10:50 -11:40	LEAN and Smart: Applications for Big & Small Companies Rudy Go Lean Transformation Manager Pratt and Whitney USA
11:40 -12:30	Creativity and Innovation in Quality Management: An Insight Raju Mandhyan Chairman Philippines India Business Council
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch Break
1:30 - 2:10	Quality From A Conference Center Perspective Agnes L. Fidelino AVP & Managing Director MMLDC
2:10 - 2:50	Information Systems to Drive Business Manuel Dizon Assistant Vice President e-PLDT
2:50 - 3:30	Trailblazing from the Heart and Soul: Inspiring Tomorrow Today Imelda Roberto President & CEO First Magnitude International 2006 Ellis Island Medal of Honor Recipient
3:30 - 3:45	Break
3:45 - 4:25	Strategies to Keeping Employees Engaged Albert G. Mateo General Manager Pfizer Philippines
4:25- 5:05	Unbinding Organizational Boundaries: Vertical Integration and Outsourcing Mr. Ronald Luis S. Goseco Head, Logistics & Administration Support Globe Telecom
5:05 - 5:20	Integration Ms. Cynthia J. Cabasag PSQ Trustee

OCTOBER 12, 2007 (Friday)

8:00 - 8:30	Registration
8:30 - 8:40	Invocation
8:40 - 9:10	Quality is in The EYE Anna Karina P. Gerochi Managing Director Asian Eye Institute
9:10 - 9:50	Breads that Beat the Competition Simplicio P. Umali Jr. President & General Manager Gardenia Bakeries Phil, Inc.
9:50 - 10:30	Setting the Pace in Health Care Systems Carla N. Diwa Systems Manager The Medical City
10:30 -10:50	Break
10:50 -11:40	Competing With the Giants Gerardo V. Cabochan Jr. Managing Director Pandayan Bookshop
11:40 -12:30	Enhancing Worker Marketability Rhoda C. Caliwara President & General Manager Executive Genesis Manpower Services, Inc.
12:30- 1:30	Lunch Break
1:30 - 2:10	Improving Packaging Technology for Philippine Food Products in the Regions Daisy E. Tañafranca Program Leader Packaging R&D Center Department of Science & Technology
2:10 - 2:50	Packaging Makes Perfect Carmelita R. Reyes Proprietress-Manager Rejano's Marinduque Deli 2005 Outstanding SME
2:50 - 3:30	Instilling Quality Habits: An SME Perspective Eric Mallari Brand Manager Mama Sita's Holding Co. Inc.
3:30 - 3:45	Break
3:45 - 4:25	An Entrepreneur's Story Wilson P. Ng President & CEO Ng Khai Development Corporation Small Business Entrepreneur of the year 2004
4:25 - 5:05	Minding Your Own Business Francisco J. Colayco Chairman Colayco Foundation for Education, Inc.
5:05 - 5:30	Closing Message Angelica C. Fraginal PSQ President

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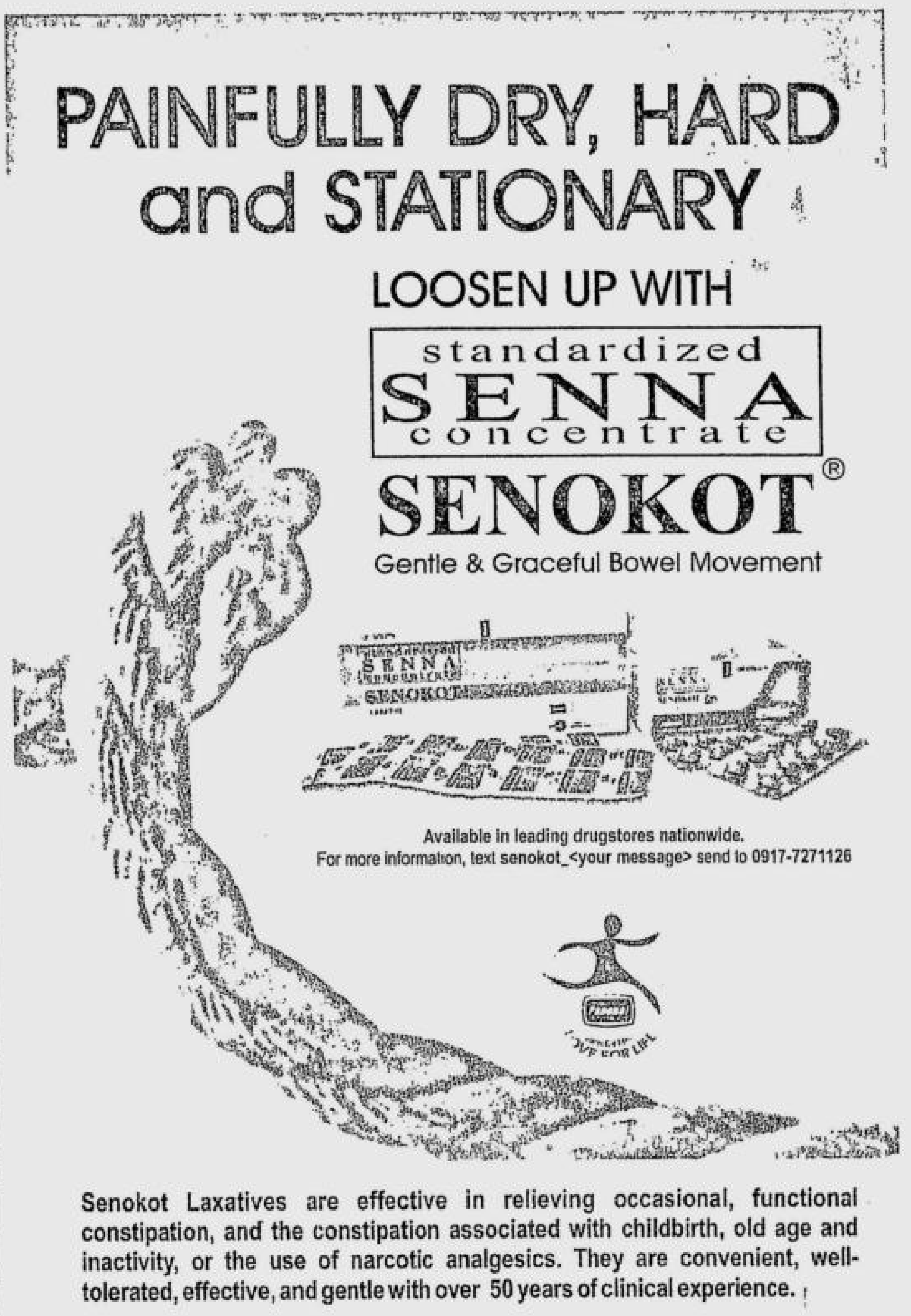

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BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
20th ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER 1, 2007

My warmest congratulations to the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) of the Department of Finance on your 20th Anniversary.

Two decades of extensive efforts in providing technical assistance to raise funds for local government units (LGUs) and improve their financial management systems certainly deserve our commendation and support.

The theme, "BLGF at the Forefront of Local Economic Development," does not only describe the hard work and dedication of the Bureau but also sets the tone for the immediate future. I recognize the vital role played by the BLGF in generating revenues, accessing funds for local development projects, and enhancing financial management systems.

Indeed, the BLGF has gone all the way to assist the local government sector to be where it is today.

Allow me, therefore, to take cognizance of your continuing efforts towards countryside development. Meeting the challenges will not be easy but with vigilance and commitment, I am confident that you can surpass what you have accomplished.

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHATI

Gloria Arroyo

Her Excellency GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Republic of the Philippines

Warmest greetings to the good men and women of the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) as you commemorate your 20th Anniversary on 01 October 2007.

The theme of this year's celebration, "BLGF AT THE FOREFRONT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT," encapsulates the vital participation of your Bureau vis-à-vis the financial reforms and improvements undertaken by the local government units (LGUs).

I commend the BLGF for opening avenues for support that enhance the confidence of the LGUs to use the full extent of their taxing and ancillary revenue generating powers provided for in ***the Local Government Code of 1991. In collaboration with the BLGF, LGUs foster alliances and partnerships with various national government agencies as well as the private sector, in generating funds and accessing financing schemes for development projects. The two decades of advocacy and essential assistance to LGUs are now reaping results.***

Best wishes to the BLGF as you continue your pivotal role in the empowerment of the LGUs. The national government acknowledges the enormous contributions of efficient, effective, and progressive LGUs towards a sustainable robust economy and long-lasting peace in the country.

Mabuhay ang BLGFI

Hon. MARGARITO "GARY" B. TEVES
Secretary of Finance

In recent years, decentralization has already shifted to the challenge of financing. It has become an issue of sustainability which simply means optimizing the provisions of the Local Government Code in bringing the revenues and translating them into projects relating to the needs of the constituency. We, in the BLGF, at the forefront of all these financial issues, have crafted strategic approaches centered on partnerships and alliances to shape the local financial environment. It has so far shown good results - a fast growing sector with high revenue growth, increasing access to funds, expanded socio-economic services and a positively contributing sector to the Consolidated Public Sector Position.

The approach adopted is to comprehensively integrate the efforts of national and local governments to further strengthen national growth. Those ***implemented include the complementation of databases for tax collection, making available to the creditors and the general public the financial performance of each and every LGU, and encouraging the financial sector to continue its support to the development needs of the LGUs, particularly those in the lower classes.***

In the next few years, the BLGF will move beyond the traditional resources of real property and business taxes. There will be efforts to promote the more potent use of borrowings and private sector financing. After the establishment of market segmentation surveys, the LGUs may begin to convert their facilities to economic enterprises and attract private investors to perform key responsibilities. This will be the future of the sustaining LGU economic development.

Our anniversary is a temporary halt to reflect on what we have accomplished. It is also the beginning of a more vigorous effort in the immediate future.

Congratulations to all of us on our 20th year anniversary!

MA. PRESENTACION R. MONTESA
Executive Director, BLGF

BLGF AND PHALTRA: DYNAMIC PARTNERS IN LOCAL FINANCE

We celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) with passion and commend the agency for its significant role in enlarging local government's fiscal capacity and for keeping the local economy on sustainable levels with its watchful eyes.

No doubt, the partnership between PHALTRA and BLGF ***continues to play a critical role in promoting efficient management of local financial resources to serve the interest of the populace.***

Indeed, the rate of growth and the quality of growth on the grassroot level had improved general living standards and ensured the nation's mass-based social objectives, for which reason we are proud to be associated with this great institution.

Congratulations and more power to BLGFI God bless.

VICTOR B. ENDRIGA, Ph.D.
President, Philippine Association of
Local Treasurers and Assessors (PHATRA), Inc.

BLGF IN THE PAST . . .

The past years saw the evolution of the Bureau of Local Government Finance from a mere organizational unit of the Provincial and Municipal Finance Division of the Department of Finance to its present status as a Bureau. The former unit was restructured into Local Government Finance Division consisting of 35 personnel. On September 24, 1972, PD No. 1 was enacted to effect reorganization and administrative reforms in the government machinery. Thru this Decree, the Local Government Finance Division evolved into Local Government Finance Service

On July 17, 1974, PD No. 509 was issued creating a Local Tax Ordinance Advisory Board to become an integral part of the Local Government Finance Service. This Decree was enacted in response to the urgent need to create a body which would assist the Secretary of Finance in the review of the new and revised ordinances; to handle or decide cases of protests or complaints of taxpayers, requests for advice, proper interpretation of certain codal provisions and other related matters.

On December 21, 1977, PD 1266 was enacted to provide for the establishment of the Regional Offices of the Department of Finance and to further restructure the Local Government Finance Service into the Office of Local Government Finance. This Decree was aimed at providing an effective mechanism for the implementation, coordination and monitoring of national and local fiscal plans and programs at the local levels.

The issuance of Executive Order No. 766 on January 7, 1982 effected the turn-over of supervision of the Real Property Tax Administration (RPTA) Program from the then, Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD) to the Ministry of Finance (MOF).

The urgent demands of national economic recovery after the 1986 February revolution necessitated changes in the organizational and functional structure of the bureaucracy. Hence, on January 30, 1987, by virtue of Sec. 43 of Executive Order No. 127, the Department of Finance was reorganized, and the Office of Local Government Finance was elevated to a Bureau now called the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF).

DEVELOPMENTAL MANDATES

The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) is the arm of the Department of Finance (DOF) directly responsible for the fiscal and financial affairs of local government units in the Philippines. Under the decentralized regime provided for under the 1992 Local Government Code (LGC), BLGF provides a catalytic role in effective and sustainable management of fiscal and financial resources of local government units (LGUs), transforming them into key contributors to national development. BLGF's local government unit (LGU)-related mandates cover the following areas

Revenue administration and fund management: Assist in the formulation and implementation of policies on local government revenue administration and fund management (to include the efficient use and management of local government resources in an effort to prevent fiscal deficits);

Treasury and assessment operations: Exercise administrative and technical supervision and coordination over the treasury and assessment operations of LGUs;

Resource management, collection enforcement and credit utilization: Develop and promote plans and programs for the improvement of resource management systems, collection enforcement mechanisms and credit utilization schemes at the local levels;

Sources of financing: Provide technical assistance to LGUs on local taxation, real property assessment and taxation, operation of economic enterprises, credit financing, municipal bond issues, alternative and non-traditional sources of financing, and related finance matters, and issue guidelines as may be necessary for this purpose;

LGU financial position: Determine the sufficiency and level of income for the creation, conversion or abolition of LGUs, based on acceptable standards set by law to provide for all essential government facilities and services and special functions commensurate to the size of the population; update the income classification of LGUs to reflect the changes in their financial position resulting from increased revenues; to provide accurate, timely, uniform and comparable local government financial information to the financial market as may be requested, and assist in the consolidation of national accounts and economic indicators by providing relevant financial information in the LGU sector.

In fulfilling these vital roles the basic approach of BLGF is slowly shifting from regulatory to facilitation. To effectively act as financial advisers to LGUs, BLGF is embarking on a reengineering and retooling of its organizational structure and people.

"BLGF AT THE FOREFRONT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT"

A healthy and favorable financial position ensures continued progress and development. This is the core of the BLGF business. Two decades ago amidst complex challenges, the Bureau has sustained its ability as an arm of the Department of Finance to transform LGUs into financially sustainable institutions making them big contributors to national development. The BLGF has made its mark and continues to influence a higher level of efficiency in local financial governance thru creative policies and programs to better address the demands of the LGUs.

New LGU Financial Performance Monitoring System established.

The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) established and continuously maintains LGU Financial Monitoring System to sustain an accurate and timely LGU database that could be readily accessed by stakeholders. The system involves the monitoring of fourteen (14) financial indicators that reflects how well the LGU funds have been utilized and the Statement of Income and Expenditure Reporting System which is a tool to gather baseline data for simulation of basic and vital information on the fiscal performance of the LGUs.

and Revenue Generation Program expanded....

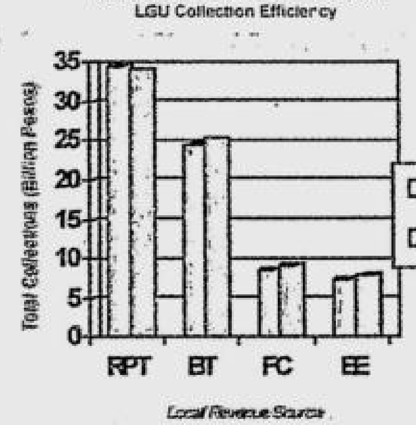
Alongside the LGU Financial Performance Monitoring, the BLGF initiated the Revenue Generation Program aimed at improving LGUs' performance in generating locally sourced income. The program initially revolved around the collection of real property taxes which is the LGUs' major and most stable income. The effectiveness of the program dictated its expansion to include collections on business taxes, fees and charges and receipts from the operation of economic enterprises

Various factors contribute to the LGUs' attainment of their respective targets. LGU revenue bases are enhanced through programs and projects such as the Real Property Tax Administration (RPTA) Project, conduct of General Revision of Real Property Values/Assessments, enforcement of administrative remedies in the collection of taxes, installation of computerized systems of collection in LGUs and updating their local revenue codes

translating into better financial performance

The overall fiscal performance of the LGUs over the past three years exhibited surpluses at an average of P25.03 Billion indicating a positive entry into the consolidated public sector deficit. In 2006, total income reached P224.13 billion as against expenditure of P193.78 billion. The high surpluses is a result of improved collection efficiency in all local sources

REVENUE GENERATION PROGRAM
LGU Collection Efficiency



Better Credit Monitoring of LGUs underway ..

BLGF undertakes subsidiary activities in aid of LGU operations through the continued monitoring of LGU credit. An integrated LGU credit database to monitor existing loans, bond floats and other forms of credit is currently developed. The database provides an input to loans and credit availment of LGUs and serves as a cross-reference among potential creditors in setting up appropriate financing windows to LGUs. It also serves as the baseline input for computing LGU debt service and borrowing capacities

...as non traditional sources of local revenues continued to be tapped .

BLGF addressed the information gap obtaining in LGUs on other revenue generating aspects like bond flotation, build-operate-transfer and variants such as public-private partnerships. Comprehensive training programs covering modules on these non-traditional sources of financing projects were implemented nationwide. The LGUs were encouraged to study the mechanics on the making of municipal bonds and build-operate-transfer schemes to make them more adept in such engagements.

Resource Mobilization through the LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT Project.

BLGF assists the Municipal Development Fund Office (MDFO) of DOF in promoting the World Bank-assisted LOGOFIND Project, a loan window for LGU infrastructure and technical assistance. The resource mobilization component of this project aims to address the enormous demand for LGUs to provide financing for local development projects. BLGF conceptualized an enhanced program in promoting various options by which the LGUs could avail of project funds.

Under this component, BLGF is expected to continue undertaking LGU interventions through the implementation of the Real Property Tax Administration (RPTA) Project and the Business Tax Enhancement Project (BTEP). Said projects respectively seek to expand the tax bases on business and real property through an inventory of existing businesses or real property units. LGU training programs were likewise packaged under this component to capacitate LGUs with various strategic revenue enhancement measures

. and improving property appraisal commenced under LAMP2

The BLGF and the National Tax Research Center are tasked to jointly implement the Property Valuation and Land Taxation component of the 2nd Land Administration and Management (LAMP2) Project, an inter-agency project led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, funded by the World Bank with technical assistance from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). The valuation component is aimed at improving the quality of government and private sector property appraisal performance through the establishment of a single valuation base and the separation of the valuation and assessment functions from tax-setting and political influence. The single valuation will provide a sound basis for the assessment of real property taxes, widening the taxation base and assisting in the improvement and enhancement of tax collection

... as more studies under Asian Development Bank (ADB) Technical Assistance 4556 to improve systems and operations of LGUs are undertaken

The ADB TA 4556 project aims to help LGUs improve their financial resource mobilization, increase local revenue and expand access to the credit market. The TA has seven components: Legal and Analytical Issues, Studies Towards Improving BLGF Systems and Databases, Studies Towards Improving LGU Operations, Studies Towards Enhancing LGU Creditworthiness, Studies towards Strengthening MDFO, Studies Towards Improving Performance Measurement and Studies Towards Professionalizing LGU Financial Managers. The ADB TA 4556 project is also committed to develop databases on LGU Financial Service Providers, LGU Debt Monitoring and LGU Credit Information for various local government finance stakeholders

and capacitating BLGF Officials and Employees for Better Public Service - thru PAHRDF interventions ..

To be able to appropriately respond to the reforms under the Philippine Development Forum (PDF), BLGF initiated strategies for change to ensure adaptability to current trends and this include a partnership/engagement with the Philippines-Australia Human Resource Development Facility (PAHRDF) for the opportunity to undertake HRD training programs that will further develop and enhance the capabilities of BLGF staff, and make sure that the Bureau efficiently delivers its services.

Vision

BLGF is THE focal agency and an authority in local finance.

Mission

BLGF is the catalyst for local government units to achieve sustainable and effective financial management, thus making them contributors to national development.

Development Partners

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BLGF Supports the Ten-Point Agenda of PGMA!

"BEAT THE ODDS - this will be our battle cry and agenda for the next six years."
-- Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

- B - Balanced budget
- E - Education for all
- A - Automated elections
- T - Transport and digital infrastructure to connect the country
- T - Terminate the MILF and NPA conflicts
- H - Heal the wounds of EDSA
- E - Electricity and water for all barangays
- O - Opportunities for 10 million jobs
- D - Decongest Metro Manila
- D - Develop Clark and
- S - Subic

www.blgf.gov.ph

BLGF'S ROLE IN PROMOTING FISCAL EFFICIENCY

There are three dimensions of fiscal efficiency as far as LGUs are concerned. First, there is the so-called "*correspondence aspect*" where local taxes should be connected with the services that LGU taxpayers receive. Second, the system of grants and *transfers* from the central government should provide adequate finance to LGUs *without overly distorting* LGU revenue mobilization preference, e.g. using the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) as a substitute for politically costly local tax measures. And third, the system of finance of LGUs, particularly, borrowings, *should not threaten key macro-economic targets* as budgetary deficits, inflation, and interest rates.

Promoting Local Tax Correspondence

BLGF has consistently *promoted* the use of *local taxes, fees* and *user charges* that correspond well to the economic activity supported by LGU services. The efforts of the BLGF alongside the 1992 LGC have resulted in substantial improvements in the correspondence between local revenue mobilization vis-à-vis economic activities.

Figure 1 shows the relationship between LGU revenue from taxation and GDP from 1967 to 2005. Note that the organization of the BLGF in 1987 and the enactment of the *1992 LGC* are *key milestones*. Prior to these two events, the growth path of LGU revenue from taxation relative to economic activity as measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was relatively path. After these two events, the *growth path* of LGU revenue from taxation *sharply became steep*. A flattening was noted after the 2004 elections primarily due to the political bickering and the resulting instability

Multiple regression analysis has indicated that the *operation of BLGF* has added *0.53%* to the annual percentage growth rate of LGU revenue from taxation while the implementation of the *1992 LGC* has added *1.42%* annually.

The *combined effects* of the two — operation of BLGF and the 1991 LGC — have contributed approximately *Php 10.2 billion* annually to LGU revenue from taxation

Avoiding the Distorting Effects of the IRA and Other National Government Transfers

BLGF is attacking the observed distortions caused by national government transfers via two complementary strategies.

- Assisting LGUs on improving local revenue mobilization, particularly, real property taxes (RPT), business taxes (BT), and regulatory fees/user charges, and economic enterprises.
- Helping LGUs access the credit market for project financing.

Threat Prevention on Macroeconomic Targets

The no-deficit budgetary rule is strictly implemented by BLGF's treasurers.

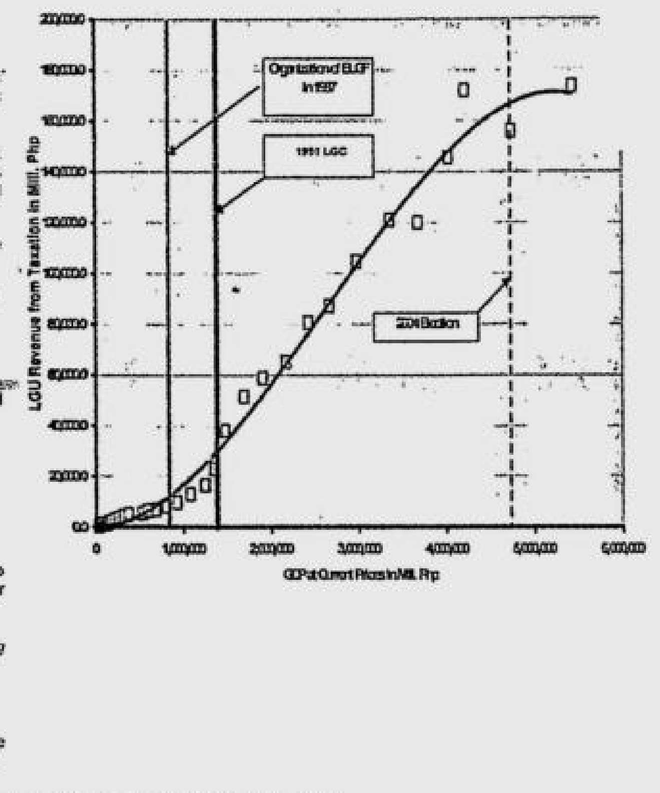
BLGF has consistently promoted *judicious borrowings* by LGU via the setting of *conservative debt service capacities* based on the statutory limits applied to Commission on Audit (COA)-audited accounting figures. It has also consistently batted for use of *market interest rates* for LGU borrowings for revenue-generating or -anticipating projects

BLGF with technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is *improving* on its *debt certification system* via the development of a *debt monitoring system* and a *creditworthiness rating system*

Impact of BLGF's Efforts on Economic Growth

Operating using the framework of the 1992 LGC, regression analysis indicates that *BLGF*'s operations has *annually contributed about Php 535.1 billion* to the country's GDP at current prices based on an estimated Php 10.5 billion annual combined effects of BLGF operation and the 1992 LGC on LGU revenue from taxation.

Fig.1 LGU Revenue from Taxation and GDP



BLGF OFFICIALS

Greetings From: **LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES**
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
20th ANNIVERSARY, OCTOBER 1, 2007

My warmest congratulations to the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) of the Department of Finance on your 20th Anniversary.

Two decades of extensive efforts in providing technical assistance to raise funds for local government units (LGUs) and improve their financial management systems certainly deserve our commendation and support.

The theme, "BLGF at the Forefront of Local Economic Development," does not only describe the hard work and dedication of the Bureau but also sets the tone for the immediate future. I recognize the vital role played by the BLGF in generating revenues, accessing funds for local development projects, and enhancing financial management systems.

Indeed, the BLGF has gone all the way to assist the local government sector to be where it is today.

Allow me, therefore, to take cognizance of your continuing efforts towards countryside development. Meeting the challenges will not be easy but with vigilance and commitment, I am confident that you can surpass what you have accomplished.

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHAT!

Gloria Arroyo
Her Excellency GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Republic of the Philippines

Warmest greetings to the good men and women of the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) as you commemorate your 20th Anniversary on 01 October 2007

The theme of this year's celebration, "BLGF AT THE FOREFRONT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT," encapsulates the vital participation of your Bureau vis-à-vis the financial reforms and improvements undertaken by the local government units (LGUs).

I commend the BLGF for opening avenues for support that enhance the confidence of the LGUs to use the full extent of their taxing and ancillary revenue generating powers provided for in the Local Government Code of 1991. In collaboration with the BLGF, LGUs foster alliances and partnerships with various national government agencies as well as the private sector, in generating funds and accessing financing schemes for development projects. The two decades of advocacy and essential assistance to LGUs are now reaping results

Best wishes to the BLGF as you continue your pivotal role in the empowerment of the LGUs. The national government acknowledges the enormous contributions of efficient, effective, and progressive LGUs towards a sustainable robust economy and long-lasting peace in the country

Mabuhay ang BLGF!

Hon. MARGARITO "GARY" B. TEVES
Secretary of Finance

In recent years, decentralization has already shifted to the challenge of financing. It has become an issue of sustainability which simply means optimizing the provisions of the Local Government Code in bringing the revenues and translating them into projects relating to the needs of the constituency. We, in the BLGF at the forefront of all these financial issues, have crafted strategic approaches centered on partnerships and alliances to shape the local financial environment. It has so far shown good results - a fast growing sector with high revenue growth, increasing access to funds, expanded socio-economic services and a positively contributing sector to the Consolidated Public Sector Position

The approach adopted is to comprehensively integrate the efforts of national and local governments to further strengthen national growth. Those implemented include the complementation of databases for tax collection, making available to the creditors and the general public the financial performance of each and every LGU, and encouraging the financial sector to continue its support to the development needs of the LGUs, particularly those in the lower classes

In the next few years, the BLGF will move beyond the traditional resources of real property and business taxes. There will be efforts to promote the more potent use of borrowings and private sector financing. After the establishment of market segmentation surveys, the LGUs may begin to convert their facilities to economic enterprises and attract private investors to perform key responsibilities. This will be the future of the sustaining LGU economic development

Our anniversary is a temporary halt to reflect on what we have accomplished. It is also the beginning of a more vigorous effort in the immediate future

Congratulations to ... 20th ye

MA. PRESENTACION R. MONTESA
Executive Director, BLGF

BLGF AND PHALTRA: DYNAMIC PARTNERS IN LOCAL FINANCE

We celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) with passion and commend the agency for its significant role in enlarging local government's fiscal capacity and for keeping the local economy on sustainable levels with its watchful eyes

No doubt, the partnership between PHALTRA and BLGF continues to play a critical role in promoting efficient management of local financial resources to serve the interest of the populace.

Indeed, the rate of growth and the quality of growth on the grassroot level had improved general living standards and ensured the nation's mass-based social objectives, for which reason we are proud to be associated with this great institution.

Congratulations and more power to BLGF! God bless

VICTOR B. ENDRIGA, Ph.D.
President, Philippine Association of Local Treasurers and Assessors (PHATRA), Inc

BLGF IN THE PAST . . .

The past years saw the evolution of the Bureau of Local Government Finance from a mere organizational unit of the Provincial and Municipal Finance Division of the Department of Finance to its present status as a Bureau. The former unit was restructured into Local Government Finance Division consisting of 35 personnel. On September 24, 1972, PD No. 1 was enacted to effect reorganization and administrative reforms in the government machinery. Thru this Decree, the Local Government Finance Division evolved into Local Government Finance Service

On July 17, 1974, PD No. 509 was issued creating a Local Tax Ordinance Advisory Board to become an integral part of the Local Government Finance Service. This Decree was enacted in response to the urgent need to create a body which would assist the Secretary of Finance in the review of the new and revised ordinances; to handle or decide cases of protests or complaints of taxpayers, requests for advice, proper interpretation of certain codal provisions and other related matters.

On December 21, 1977, PD 1265 was enacted to provide for the establishment of the Regional Offices of the Department of Finance and to further restructure the Local Government Finance Service into the Office of Local Government Finance. This Decree was aimed at providing an effective mechanism for the implementation, coordination and monitoring of national and local fiscal plans and programs at the local levels

The issuance of Executive Order No. 768 on January 7, 1982 effected the turn-over of supervision of the Real Property Tax Administration (RPTA) Program from the then, Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD) to the Ministry of Finance (MOF)

The urgent demands of national economic recovery after the 1986 February revolution necessitated changes in the organizational and functional structure of the bureaucracy. Hence, on January 30, 1987, by virtue of Sec. 43 of Executive Order No. 127, the Department of Finance was reorganized, and the Office of Local Government Finance was elevated to a Bureau now called the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF).

DEVELOPMENTAL MANDATES

The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) is the arm of the Department of Finance (DOF) directly responsible for the fiscal and financial affairs of local government units in the Philippines. Under the decentralized regime provided for under the 1992 Local Government Code (LGC), BLGF provides a catalytic role in effective and sustainable management of fiscal and financial resources of local government units (LGUs), transforming them into key contributors to national development. BLGF's local government unit (LGU)-related mandates cover the following areas

Revenue administration and fund management: Assist in the formulation and implementation of policies on local government revenue administration and fund management (to include the efficient use and management of local government resources in an effort to prevent fiscal deficits);

Treasury and assessment operations: Exercise administrative and technical supervision and coordination over the treasury and assessment operations of LGUs;

Resource management, collection enforcement and credit utilization: Develop and promote plans and programs for the improvement of resource management systems, collection enforcement mechanisms and credit utilization schemes at the local levels;

Sources of financing: Provide technical assistance to LGUs on local taxation, real property assessment and taxation, operation of economic enterprises, credit financing, municipal bond issues, alternative and non-traditional sources of financing, and related finance matters, and issue guidelines as may be necessary for this purpose.

LGU financial position: Determine the sufficiency and level of income for the creation, conversion or abolition of LGUs, based on acceptable standards set by law to provide for all essential government facilities and services and special functions commensurate to the size of the population, update the income classification of LGUs to reflect the changes in their financial position resulting from increased revenues, to provide accurate, timely, uniform and comparable local government financial information to the financial market as may be requested and assist in the consolidation of national accounts and economic indicators by providing relevant financial information in the LGU sector

In fulfilling these vital roles the basic approach of BLGF is slowly shifting from regulatory to facilitation. To effectively act as financial advisers to LGUs, BLGF is embarking on a reengineering and retooling of its organizational structure and people.

"BLGF AT THE FOREFRONT OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT"

A healthy and favorable financial position amidst complex challenges, the Bureau h institutions making them big contributors t local financial governance thr

New 1 cal Performance inform ste ablish

The Bureau of Local Government Fin (BLGF continuously maintains LGU Financial Mo Sys accurate and timely LGU database that can be stakeholders. The system involves the monitori financial indicators that reflects ... utilized and the Statement of Inc ... which is a tool to gather baseline data information on the fiscal performance of th

Revenue Generation Program expanded

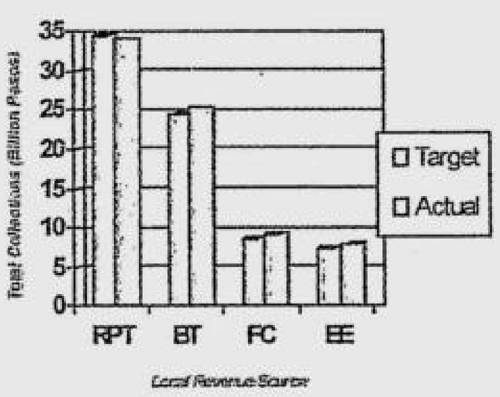
Alongside the LGU Financial Perfor Mo the Revenue Generation Program imed performance in generating locally sourced ... revolved around the collection of real property t major and most stable income. The effe dictated its expansion to include collections charges and receipts from the operation ...

Various factors contribute ... targets. LGU revenue base ... projects such as the Real P ... Tax conduct of General Rev enforcement of admi istr installation of computerize their local reven codes

better

The overall ... exhibited surpluses ... avera entry into the consolidated public sector reached P224.13 billion as against expenditure high surpluses is a result of improved collecti ... sources

REVENUE GENERATION PROGRAM
LGU Collection Efficiency



Better Credit Monitoring of LGUs underway.

BLGF undertakes subsidiary activities in aid of LGU ... continued monitoring of LGU credit. An integrated LGU ... monitor existing loans, bond floats and other forms of credit developed. The database provides an input to loans and c LGUs and serves as a cross-reference among potentia up appropriate financing windows to LGUs. It also ser input for computing LGU debt service and borrowing cap

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...ment Fu ... Office (MDFO) of DOF ... OGOFIND Project, a loan window for ...sista... The resource mobilization ... enormous demand for LGUs ... projects. BLGF conceptualized ... options for which the LGUs

...tinue undertaking LGU ... Real Property Tax ... Enhancement Project ... the tax base ... ing busines ... packaged ... strategic

...ommend

...ter ... are tasked to jointly ... d Tax ... component ... the 2nd ... AMP ... oject ... agency ... onmen... Natural ... ources ... ical assista... from ... ustralian ... (AusAID) ... valuation component ... ality of government and private sector property ... the establishment ... single valuation bas ... sation and assess ... functio... The single valuation ... provide ... sound ... of real property taxes, widening the taxat... base ... and enhancement of tax collect...

... as more studies under Asian Development Bank (ADB ... Assistance 4556 to improve systems and operations of ... undertaken

...nprove the financial ... expand access to the ... arket ... Legal and Analytical ... Studies T ... and Databases Studies ... improv... Studi Towards Enhancing LGU ... rthiness, ... ards Strengthe... g MDFO, Studies Towards ... Measurem... Studies Towards ... LGU ... cal Mana... ADB TA 4556 project is ... ned to dev... atabases c LGU ... ncial Service Providers, ... Monitorin... d LGU Cr... Info ... various local

and capacitating BLGF Officials a... oyees for Bette ... thru PAHRDF interventions.

... nat ... eform ... under the Philippine ... (PDF ... strategies for change to ensure ... lity to current trend... this ... de ... partnership/engagement ... the Philippines-Austr... Human Resour... Development Facility (PAHRDF) ... th ... take HRD ... programs that will further ... nce ... abilities of ... staff and make sure

BLGF's ROLE IN PROMOTING FISCAL EFFICIENCY

There are three dimensions of fiscal efficiency as far as LGUs are concerned. First, there is the so-called *'correspondence aspect'* where local taxes should be connected with the services that LGU taxpayers receive. Second, the system of grants and *transfers* from the central government should provide adequate finance to LGUs *without overly distorting* LGU revenue mobilization preference, e.g., using the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) as a substitute for politically costly local tax measures. And third, the system of finance of LGUs, particularly borrowings, *should not threaten key macro-economic targets* as budgetary deficits, inflation, and interest rates

Promoting Local Tax Correspondence

BLGF has consistently *promoted* the use of *local taxes, fees* and *user charges* that correspond well to the economic activity supported by LGU s... The efforts of the BLGF alongside the 1992 LGC have resulted in substantial improvements in the correspondence between local revenue mobilization ... activities

Figure 1 shows the relationship between LGU revenue from taxation and GDP from 1967 to 2005. Note that the organization of the BLGF ... of the *1992 LGC are key milestones*. Prior to these two events, the growth path of LGU revenue from taxation relative to economic activity as measured by ... Domestic Product (GDP) was relatively path. After these two events, the *growth path* of LGU revenue from taxation *sharply became steep*, ...-flattening w... after the 2004 elections primarily due to the political bickering and the resulting instability

Multiple regression analysis has indicated that the *operation of BLGF* has added *0.53%* to the annual percentage growth rate of LGU r... e from taxat... implementation of the *1992 LGC* has added *1.42%* annually

The *combined effects* of the two — operation of BLGF and the 1991 LGC — have contributed approximately *Php 10.2 billion* annua

Avoiding the Distorting Effects of the IRA and Other National Government Transfers

BLGF is attacking the observed distortions caused by national government transfers via two complementary strategies.

- Assisting LGUs on improving local revenue mobilization, particularly, real property taxes (RPT), business taxes (BT), and regulatory fees; ... economic enterprises.
- Helping LGUs access the credit market for project financing

Threat Prevention on Macroeconomic Targets

The no-deficit budgetary rule is strictly implemented by BLGF's treasurers

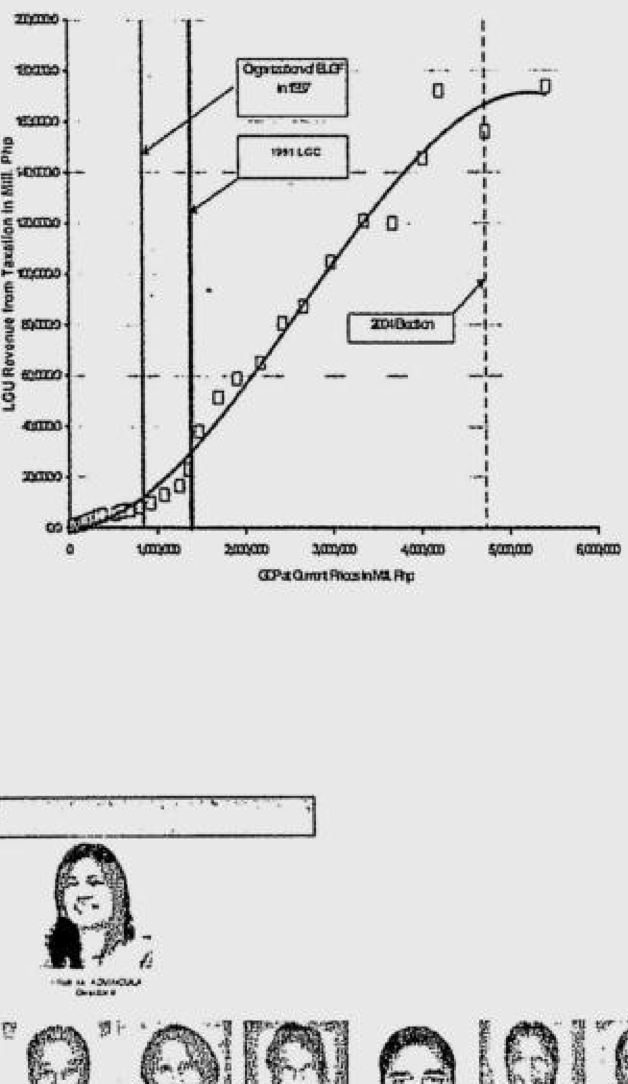
BLGF has consistently promoted *judicious borrowings* by LGU via the setting of *conservative debt service capacities* based on the statutory Commission on Audit (COA)-audited accounting figures. It has also consistently batted for use of *market interest rates* for LGU borrowings for rever... -anticipating projects

BLGF with technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is *improving* on its *debt certification system* via the ...ve ... *debt* ...nitor *system* and a *creditworthiness rating system*

Impact of BLGF's Efforts on Economic Growth

Operating using the framework of the 1992 LGC, regression analysis indicates that *BLGF*'s operations has *annually contributed about Php 535.1 billion* to country's GDP at current prices based on an estimated Php 10.5 billion annual combined effects of BLGF operation and the 1992 LGC on LGU revenue from taxat...

Fig.1 LGU Revenue from Taxation and GDP



Vision

BLGF is THE focal agency and an authority in local finance.

Mission

BLGF is the catalyst for local government units to achieve sustainable and effective financial management, thus making them contributors to national development.

Development Partners

Australian Government
AusAID

ADB

BLGF Supports the Ten-Point Agenda of PGMA!

"BEAT THE ODDS - this will be our battle cry and agenda for the next six years."
Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

- B - Balanced budget
- E - Education for all
- A - Automated elections
- T - Transport and digital infrastructure to connect the country
- T - Terminate the MILF and NPA conflicts
- H - Heal the wounds of EDSA
- E - Electricity and water for all barangays
- O - Opportunities for 10 million jobs
- D - Decongest Metro Manila
- D - Develop Clark and Subic

www.blgf.gov.ph

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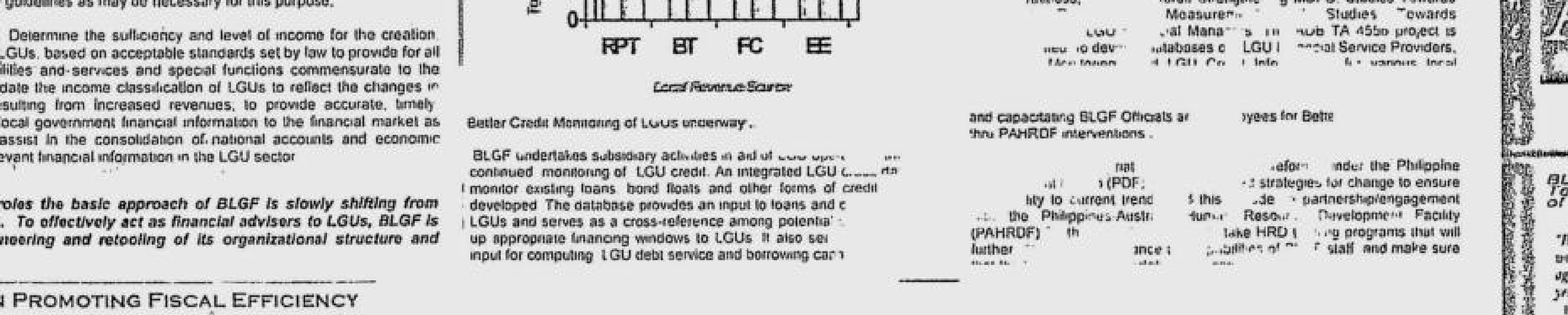

Greetings From: LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

MONDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2007
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
A19

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074)443-9255
Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
2nd Floor, Los Baños Bldg.
Cor. Peñaranda and Aguinaldo Sts.
Legazpi City
Telefax No. (052) 480-4182
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/regions
Across the NATION
Text us your feedback: inquirer atn name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) *Assistant Editor* **Tony Bergonia**

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: inq_cebu@inquirer.com.ph

MINDANAO BUREAU
FEP Printing Corp. Bldg.
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Fax No. (082)244-1771
E-mail: inq_davao@inquirer.com.ph

Landslide crushes Ifugao houses; 9 die

By Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—TWO FAMILIES IN two houses in a village in Hingyon, 10 kilometers from the tourist town of Banaue in Ifugao, were asleep on Saturday night when falling rocks thundered on them.

In minutes, nine people, including three girls, were killed as rocks and mud buried the two houses along the Hingyon-Banaue Road in Barangay Upper Pitawan.

Reports reaching here said the slide happened at about 10 p.m. when rocks rolled down from the mountainside along the road and crushed the houses.

Nine members of the Linglingon and Hiadan families were buried alive while a 9-year-old boy survived, the reports said.

Jerome Tuguinay, 28, who was among the first to reach the site, said the victims were pinned down by the rocks and debris.

A crew from the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council and residents in the area helped recover eight bodies, said Tuguinay, who is a member of the staff of Ifugao Vice Gov. Nora Dinamling.

He said the body of Henry Linglingon, 55, had yet to be recovered while the lone survivor, Linglingon's grandson, Denver Bogbog, was taken to the Ifugao Provincial Hospital in Lagawe, the capital town.

Reports said the monsoon rains enhanced by tropical Storm "Hanna" could have triggered the landslide. Ifugao had been under storm signal No. 1 since Friday after Hanna, with its 55 kilometers per hour winds, crossed Northern Luzon.

Erma Hiadan, 50, and her three grandchildren—Ruby, 7; Megan, 5; and Johani, 3, all surnamed Manwong—died in the slide. The children's parents are working abroad.

The OCD identified the other fatalities as Cupilyo Hiadan, 80; Julia Linglingon, 52, Henry's wife, and their children Joel, 27, and Rommel, 30.

The slide blocked the Hingyon-Banaue Road, according to reports of the Office of Civil Defense in the Cordillera.

Rescue workers reported damage to two irrigation systems servicing 350 families of Lubuagan, Kalinga.

The Wa-it communal irrigation network was washed out by rains while strong rains damaged the neighboring Tab-taba communal irrigation system, the OCD said.

Weather conditions in Ifugao, Kalinga and other Cordillera provinces have improved, the OCD reported, although continuous rains have forced operators of the state-owned Binga and Ambuklao hydroelectric power dams in Benguet to each open one exit gate by a meter.

This is standard operating procedure for dams whose water levels rise close to their respective critical levels due to impounded rainwater.

With reports from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

'Hanna' exits toward Vietnam

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "HANNA" yesterday swirled out of the country for Vietnam, but would continue to induce the southwest monsoon to bring light rains over the western section of northern Luzon.

Hannah exited the Philippine area of responsibility at around noon Sunday after triggering rains over northern and central Luzon, and the western section of southern Luzon and the Visayas.

Light to moderate rains triggered landslides and spawned floods in areas caught in the path of the depression.

The heaviest total rainfall of 129.8 mm was felt in Subic, Zambales, during a 24-hour period beginning Saturday morning, according to weather forecaster Peter Kindipan Jr.

As it continued to move away from the country, the depression would induce the southwest monsoon to bring rain over the western section of Luzon, including Metro Manila, he said.

"So we will continue to experience cloudy weather with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms, mostly in the afternoon," Kindipan said in an interview.

"The monsoon will also weaken unless the new low pressure area east of Central Luzon develops."

Pagasa lifted the storm signals over several provinces in Luzon at 5 a.m. Sunday. It, however, continued to advise the public living in low-lying areas and near mountain slopes to take precautions against flash floods and landslides. *TJ Burgonio*

APQO

News Release

Asian Pacific Quality Organizaion
45 Hybrid St., Phase IV
Greenwoods Executive Village
Cainta Rizal, PHILIPPINES

Contact: Charles Aubrey
815-387-4970
caubrey@andpkg.com

Asia Pacific Quality Organization Announces Winners of World Class Performance-International Asia Pacific Quality Awards

Best Performing Organizations in the World

Chicago, Illinois, USA July 31, 2007- Asia Pacific Quality Organization (APQO) today announced The World Class Winners of the International Asia Pacific Quality Awards.

> *"We are pleased to announce eight organizations from Asia and the Pacific Rim are exemplary companies of world class quality performance as evidenced by winning the International Asia Pacific Quality Award modeled after the U.S. Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Award" said Charles Aubrey, Chairman of APQO and the International Asia Pacific Quality Award Executive Committee.*

The following organizations have won the **WORLD CLASS AWARD.**

Large Manufacturing:
Alcatel Shanghai Bell Co., Ltd; Shanghai, China; Mr. Yuan Xin, Chairman.
PT Indo Liberty Textiles; Karawang, Indonesia; Mr. Chand Ratan Dugar, President Director.
Tata Chemicals Limited; Noida, India; Mr. Kapil Mehan, Chief Operating Officer

Large Service:
BancoEstado Microempresas Santiago, Chile; Mr. Jaime Pizarro, Chief Executive Officer/ Chairman.
Datamatics Technologies Limited; Mumbai, India; Mr. Rahul L. Kanodia, Vice Chairman and CEO.

Small Manufacturing:
Hengyuanxiang (Group) Co Ltd (Textiles); Shanghai, China; Mr. Liu Ruiqi, Chairman of the Board of Directors and General Manager.

Not-For-Profit/Government:
Nacional Financiera S.N.C. Mexico City, Mexico; Mr. C.P. Mario Laborin Gomez, Chief Executive Officer.

Education:
Centro De Desarrollo Infantil No. 5 (School); Nuevo Leon, Mexico; Ms. Maria Guadalupe Rodriguez Martinez

The following two organizations won the **BEST IN CLASS AWARD** or second highest award:

Large Manufacturing:
Dong Nai Rubber Company; Long Khanh, Vietnam; Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau, Director.

Not-For-Profit/Government:
Comision Federal de Electricidad; Morelia, Mexico; Mr. Jose de Jesus Moreno Ruiz, Division Manager

Finally the following two organizations won the **QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE** or third highest award.

Small Manufacturing:
HUU Nghi Cement Factory; Vietri City, Vietnam; Mrs. Nguyen Thi Yen, Director.

Healthcare:
Government General Hospital; Ampara, Sri Lanka; Dr. P.K.C.L. Jayasinghe, Medical Superintendent.

The awards will be presented at the APQO/ China Association of Quality Conference in Shanghai, China October 18-20. For more information on the conference visit www.caq.org.cn.

This is the seventh year of the awards with a record number of companies participating this year as well as a record number of countries participating

About the Asia Pacific Quality Organization (APQO)
The APQO was founded and organized by National Quality Organizations in Asian and Pacific Rim countries including the American Society for Quality and was incorporated in the Philippines in 1985. It is a non-profit organization formed to be a primary mover of continuous improvement for goods and services and quality of life in the Asia Pacific Region. APQO has several hundred National Quality Organizations (Core members), Corporate members, and Individual members. For more information about APQO visit www.apqo.org.

ROUNDUP

Register of deeds sacked

ILAGAN, Isabela—The chief of the register of deeds (ROD) in the province was fired last week after he and his aide were arrested while accepting bribe in an entrapment operation in his office at the provincial capitol.

Carlos Serrano, 40, was relieved from his post and transferred to Quirino, said lawyer Elyjane Maltu-Sumineg, acting chief of the ROD in Isabela. *Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Grenade blast kills farmer

COTABATO CITY—Unidentified men on a motorcycle threw a hand grenade at a farmer's home in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato on Monday evening, killing a farmer and wounding another.

Police identified the dead as Edward Federico, 29, of Barangay Midpapan, who suffered shrapnel injuries in different parts of the body. *Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

'Jueteng' raid

COTABATO CITY—Police said they have identified a suspected financier of "jueteng" after a raid on the suspect's house on Sept. 21.

City police director Senior Supt. Willie Dangane said the raid was conducted on the house of Toto Ayunan.

Dangane said Ayunan was not at home when the raid took place, but police officers invited for questioning several persons, including his wife. *Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

Outstanding rural bank

DIGOS CITY—The Land Bank of the Philippines named the Rural Bank of Digos Inc. (RBDI), the first bank established in Davao, fifth "Most Outstanding Rural Bank in the Philippines for the year 2006."

RBDI was chosen among 400 rural banks in the nationwide search launched by Landbank this year.

Landbank based its winners on organizational management, business operations and financial management; pass on rate to small farmers and fishermen; and partnership with the LBP. *Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao*

Escaped inmate nabbed

CEBU CITY—Carcar City police arrested a provincial jail inmate who escaped on March 3 after a neighbor reported that he was hiding in his parents' house in Carcar.

Cebu Provincial Police Office (CPPO) director Senior Supt. Carmelo Valmoria identified the inmate as Gilbert Palang, 23, who faces a murder charge and had been detained at the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (CPDRC).

Valmoria said the police arrested Palang at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday after a neighbor informed the police that Palang had been hiding at the house since Sept. 21. *Jhunnex Napallacan,,Inquirer Visayas*

H. Iñigo; 65

DAVAO CITY—Ateneo de Davao Law school Dean Hildegardo Iñigo died on Thursday of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease after more than two months of confinement at the Davao Doctor's Hospital here. He was 65.

Iñigo, an eight placer in the 1966 Bar Exams, taught law at the Ateneo de Davao Law School from 1967 to 2007.

His body lies at the University Chapel of the Ateneo de Davao, Jacinto Campus. Interment will be tomorrow at the Davao Memorial Park after the 9 a.m. Mass at the San Pedro Cathedral.

M. Santos; 78

MILAGROS Agas Santos, of Marulas, Bulacan, died on Sept. 25, at the age of 78. She lies at the Lily of the Valley Sanctuarium, G. Araneta and Quezon avenues in Quezon City. She will be buried tomorrow at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park in Baesa, Quezon City, after the 9 a.m. Mass.

Her husband Leonardo U. Santos; children and children-in-law Armando (†) and Carol; Tommy (†) and Inday, Nilo and Lita, Lito and Terri, Bebe, Ella, Helen, Josie and Mila (†); grandchildren and great-grandchildren, request the reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Crops worth P6M damaged

ILOILO CITY—THE Bureau of Agriculture Statistics placed damage to crops in Western Visayas at P6 million due to several days of torrential rains brought by the southwest monsoon last week.

Agriculture regional director Larry Nacionales said about 1,700 hectares of rice lands were affected, equivalent to 596 metric tons of rice, in the region.

Worst hit were Iloilo and Negros Occidental, Nacionales said in an interview on Friday. Guimaras and Antique were slightly affected.

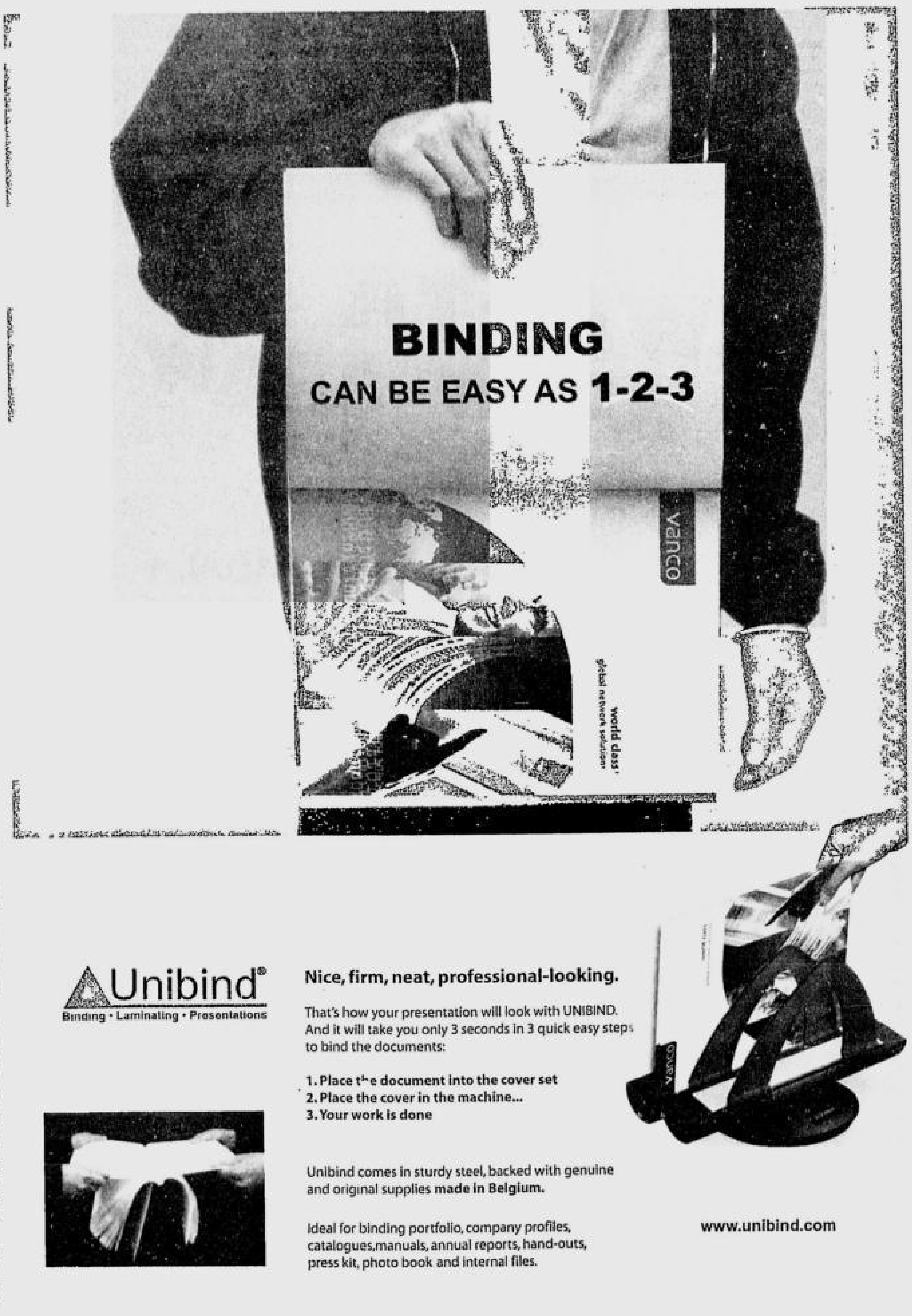
Affected

"[Farmers] in the affected provinces were not able to harvest their crops ... The provinces of Capiz and Aklan were not affected because they were able to harvest before the rain came," he added.

Nacionales said his office would provide assistance to the provinces with certified seeds and microbial inoculants. "We will subsidize them of certified seeds at half the price," he said.

Nacionales said certified seeds, which usually sell at P880 per 50-kilogram bag, would be provided at only P440 per 50-kilogram bag.

David Israel Sinay, Inquirer Visayas



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Reclassification of Arroyo land not valid, says group

BACOLOD CITY—A FARMERS' group said the reclassification of a 157-hectare land in Isabela town in Negros Occidental into agro-industrial was invalid.

The Task Force Mapalad (TFM) said the reclassification of Hacienda Bacan in Barangay Guintubhan, Isabela, allegedly owned by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, was defective because not all requirements were complied with.

"The reclassification of Hacienda Bacan from agricultural to agro-industrial land was invalid because the Sangguniang Bayan of Isabela, in passing and approving a zoning ordinance in 2005 that reclassified the property, did not secure an essential requirement—a certification from the DAR (Department of Agrarian Reform) that the property was not subject to CARP (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program)," TFM president Jose Rodito Angeles claimed in a press statement on Saturday.

Zoning ordinance

Angeles cited a legal opinion that, he said, was issued on Thursday by DAR Undersecretary for Legal Affajrs Nestor Acosta.

The opinion said that the DAR's role in the zoning ordinance reclassification process would be to certify the lands sought for reclassification were neither distributed nor covered by a notice of coverage or not voluntarily offered for coverage under CARP.

"This certification must be secured by the Sanggunian concerned prior to the enactment of an ordinance reclassifying the agricultural land to non-agricultural uses," Angeles quoted Acosta as saying.

Angeles said Hacienda Bacan was placed under CARP coverage in 2001 after Rep. Ignacio Arroyo voluntarily offered it for sale to the program.

He said the DAR processed the landowner's claim folder and submitted it to the Land Bank in 2002 for valuation of the property. Nut the Land Bank returned the claim folder to the DAR because the final bill of sale, that showed that the First Gentleman was the landowner, was not annotated in the land title.

In returning the claim folder, the Land Bank said the First Gentleman, not his brother, should be the one to make the voluntary offer to sell, the TFM statement said.

The TFM had earlier claimed that the First Gentleman owned Hacienda Bacan, located in Barangay Guintubhan, Isabela. Representative Arroyo had denied this and said Rivulet Agro-Industrial Corp. was the owner.

Purchased property

But provincial agrarian reform officer Teresita Depeñoso said records of her office showed that the First Gentleman purchased the property in 1994.

The DAR has the title of the property, as of March 19, 2001, and a certificate of sale of the delinquent property issued by the office of the Isabela treasurer for Title 105742 Lot 41 covering 157.2992 hectares with entry No. 361407 dated April 1994, Depeñoso said.

The final bill of sale at public auction on April 8, 1994 stated that the property was sold to Jose Miguel Arroyo married to Gloria M. Arroyo, she said.

The area where the property is located was reclassified from agricultural to an industrial estate by the Isabela municipal government on Sept. 27, 2005, Depeñoso said. *Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

PROTEST OVER TUITION HIKE NIÑA CATHERINE CALLEJA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

About 300 students marched Friday to protest tuition increases and other issues facing University of the Philippines' students as the UP Board of Regents met in the Los Baños Complex.

Palawan town officials scored for favoring mining companies despite track record

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—ENcouraged by a permissive local government sector and regulatory agencies that may be willing to cover for their violations, errant mining companies continue to operate in Palawan.

A company penalized last year by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for violating Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) conditions, including overextraction of minerals, has applied for a new mining exploration permit in Narra in southern Palawan and has reportedly been endorsed by local municipal officials, according to a mining watchdog organization.

Platinum Group Metals Corp. (PGMC), whose ECC was stripped by the DENR on Sept. 25, 2006, has closed its operations, but it recently applied for exploration on a new site in the same municipality.

"They (PGMC officials) are back despite the punitive actions imposed on them by the DENR. They seem to enjoy the support of local officials despite violations they committed," Beth Maclang, advocacy officer of the Palawan NGO Network (PNNI) told the INQUIRER.

Company officials repeatedly failed to return calls from the INQUIRER to respond to the issues raised against them by the antimining groups.

Planned operation

Roberto Nieto, a senior official of PGMC, however, was interviewed by a local radio station, wherein he stated that they planned to restart operations "within the next four months."

The PGMC case triggered a turf war between the Office of the Executive Secretary and the DENR during the term of then Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes, who had ordered the cancellation of PGMC's permit.

PGMC had convinced Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita to reverse Reyes' ruling on the complaint filed against it for overextraction and ECC violations.

The matter was resolved recently after Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales issued a legal opinion upholding the authority of the DENR to impose the sanction against mining companies, like PGMC.

'Restricted zone'

Maclang claimed that Narra officials recently revised their zoning plans in order to reclassify the area being applied for by PGMC in Sitio Lapu-Lapu, Barangay Poblacion from its previous designation as "restricted zone" which means closed to mining, to "multiple-use zone."

"The municipality is one of the few municipalities in Palawan that deliberately revoked its own land classification plan in February 2006 just to accommodate the mining projects that have come to that place," Maclang said.

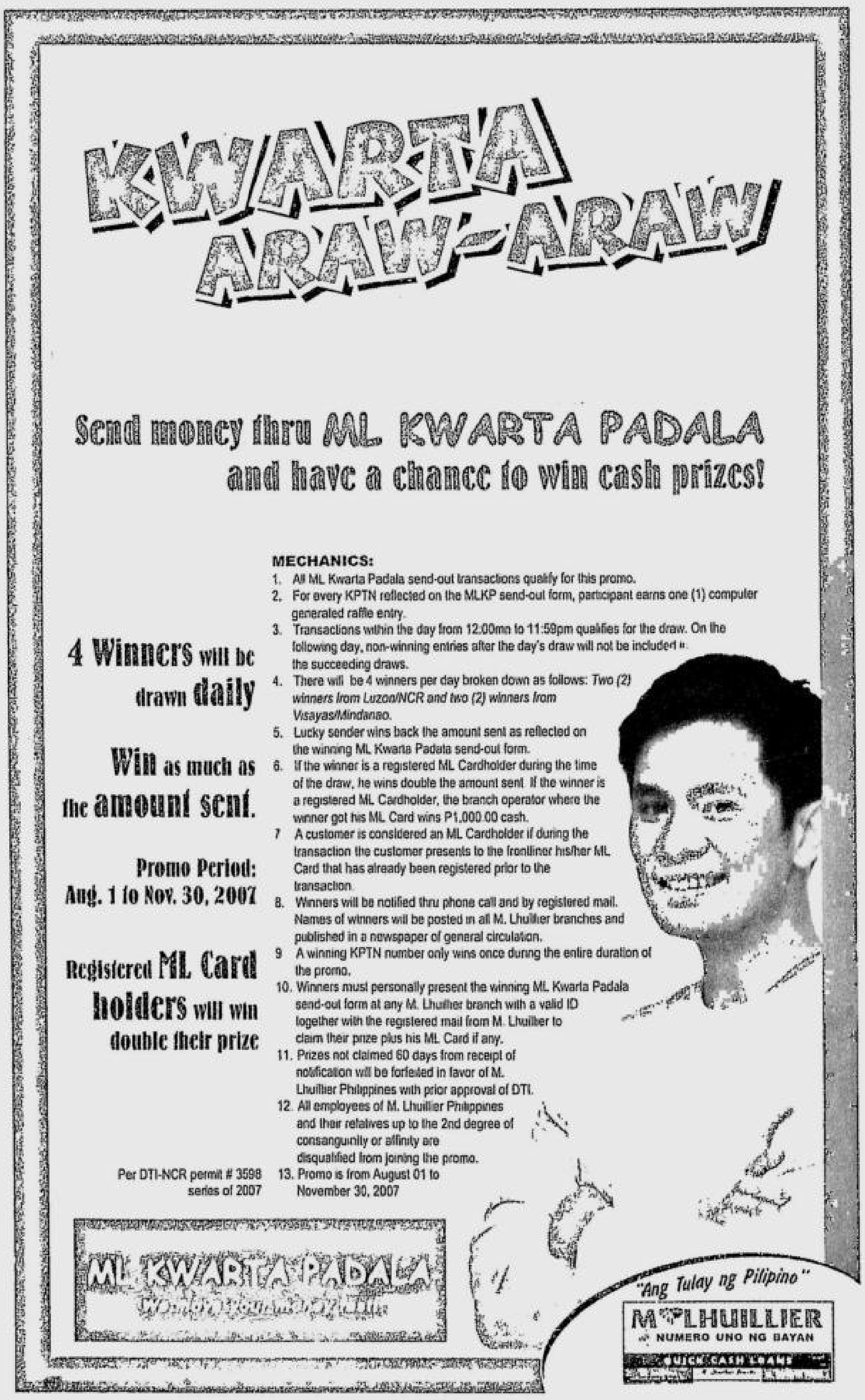
Maclang pointed out that PGMC mining operations in Barangay San Isidro, Narra had left in its wake problems such as laterite siltation of rice and agricultural lands.

PGMC paid damages to farmers whose farmlots were affected by siltation, records obtained by the INQUIRER showed.

The PNNI recently closed ranks with the Roman Catholic Church to step up its antimining campaign in Palawan, taking PGMC as a rallying issue.

Some legislators critical of the mining company have vowed to scrutinize the firm's permit applications in the provincial level.

"They should first restore the mountains that they destroyed before even contemplating on filing another application," said Board Member Gil Acosta, chair of the environment and natural resources committee. *Redempto Anda, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



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Pro-gov't groups formed vs militants

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—POLICE DIrectors in five provinces have been directed to form "people's organizations" to counter the propaganda activities of alleged legal fronts of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

"There's no other way to fight the legal fronts of the CPP but through legal means also. We should use the parliament of the streets. It's just propaganda against propaganda," said Chief Supt. Louie Palmera, newly appointed director of the Mimaropa police office on Friday.

Mimaropa covers the provinces of Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan.

Palmera also ordered the new provincial police chiefs to expect attacks and ambuscades from the communist New People's Army (NPA) in the next few days as "*pasalubong*" (welcome gift).

He told his men to initiate the setting up of pro-government groups to counter the propaganda of militant groups against the Arroyo administration and to assist in strengthening the peace and order councils in the town, provincial and regional levels.

"Law enforcement authorities and the communities are inseparable," he added.

According to Palmera, this approach is one of the highlights of the anti-insurgency operation plan being implemented under the "Maagap Alpha" program of the Philippine National Police.

The tactic has been proven effective in "driving away" CPP organizers in the barangays, the officer said.

"Maagap Alpha" is the PNP's counterpart of "Oplan Bantay Laya II" of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Palmera said.

Militants groups have claimed that the abductions and murders of their leaders and members were among the components of "Oplan Bantay Laya."

In support of "Maagap Alpha," Palmera said he had ordered more police-initiated attacks on NPA units in the region.

In the next few weeks, the elite PNP Regional Mobile Group and the Provincial Mobile Group will step up its armed campaign against the rebels, he said.

"I want all the five provincial police offices to conduct offensive operations against the NPAs at least seven days a month," Palmera said.

Husband of convicted OFW appeals to GMA

COTABATO CITY—THE HUSBAND OF A Filipino overseas worker convicted of killing her employer's son in Kuwait has appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo for help.

Leo Vecina, husband of May Membrini Vecina, said she is innocent of the charges.

"Please, Madam President, use your power, use your influence and exhaust all means to save May," Leo of Matalam, North Cotabato, said in the vernacular over Church-run radio dxND in Kidapawan City on Sept. 29.

"Have a heart for May, please help me and my children bring back my wife alive," he said in between sobs.

Leo said he had so many sleepless nights because of what happened to his wife.

May, 25, was convicted in July for the death in January of 7-year-old Salem al-Otaibi, one of her wards.

Reports based on Court records showed May "slit the boy's throat using a kitchen knife."

She was also found guilty of attempting to kill her two other wards—Abdullah, 11 and his sister Hajar, 11.

Leo said May's lawyer had lodged an appeal but the Kuwaiti Appellate Court upheld the earlier verdict, which carried a death sentence.

In Kuwait, death sentences are carried out by hanging after the execution order is signed by the Emir or the country's chief.

"The stories that we see on TV are unbelievable, what could have triggered May to attack the children when she loved children," Leo said.

"I am very puzzled by the turn of events. I can't believe that, she can't do that because she is a mother and have children too," Leo added.

He said the only reason his wife went to Kuwait was to help provide a good future for their three children.

"I'm only a farmer, how could I raise my children without their mother," Leo said.

He also appealed for prayers for his wife.

"I know the power of prayers and I know that she is innocent," Leo said. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Bugkalot dads beg for action on Casecnan fund

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—OFFICIALS and tribal elders of the Bugkalot community in remote Alfonso Castañeda town are growing edgy over the delayed resolution of a case filed against their former mayor involving the alleged misuse of P30.7 million in local funds.

Mayor Jerry Pasigian, a Bugkalot, said the people were wondering what had been keeping the Ombudsman from resolving the charges that four village chiefs filed in July 2006 against former Mayor Alfredo Castillo Jr.

"Our people have not forgotten about the money that was supposed to benefit them. They want justice for our town," he said.

Contacted on the progress of the case, officials of the Office of the Ombudsman, however, said the charges against Castillo were still under review.

In a letter sent to the INQUIRER, Rolando Zoleta, acting director of the office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, said their findings on the case were awaiting the approval of Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Castillo on Friday, but he could not be reached through his mobile phone.

In an interview made before the cases were filed against him, Castillo insisted that he had nothing to do with the loss of the barangays' RPT share.

Village shares

The P30.7 million comprises the shares of villages Pelaway, Abuyo, Cawayan and Lipuga from the accumulated P250.7-million real property tax (RPT) that was paid by California Energy-Casecnan, an American firm, in 2005.

CE Casecnan owns and operates the Casecnan Multi-Purpose Irrigation and Power Project (CMIPP), a hydroelectric facility composed of two impounding dams and a power plant connected by a pair of 26-km tunnels.

In their complaint, Bugkalot village chairs Potado Gabogen (Pelaway), Tomas Cawad (Cawayan), Engagen Pasigian (Lipuga) and Milton Suaking (Abuyo) accused Castillo of allegedly defrauding them and appropriating for himself the proceeds of their barangay's RPT share.

Mayor Pasigian expressed optimism that the case would not "fall into oblivion," amid all the hype stirred by the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) deal.

"This anomaly may be small compared to the other cases of corruption that we hear about these days. We may be a small town, but our people deserve justice as well," the mayor said.

Pasigian defeated Castillo for the mayoral post in the May 2007 elections.

Official records revealed that when the case was filed, Pelaway, which hosts CMIPP's weirs, had already received P20.3 million as its share in the RPT. Abuyo, which covers almost the entire length of the tunnels, got P10.4 million.

Lipuga and Cawayan were also given their share as a form of goodwill, as the chiefs agreed that these barangays were part of the CMIPP's "primary impact zone."

Town share

Aside from the barangay's share, the town government of Alfonso Castañeda received P110.6 million, representing 40 percent of the CE Casecnan's tax payment.

"This [case only involves] the share of the barangay. The Ombudsman should look deeper because this is just the tip of the iceberg," said an official, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisal.

The source, who is privy to the disbursement of the Casecnan fund, said provincial officials have been very lax in releasing the RPT shares of Alfonso Castañeda despite the perceived irregularities, because "they, too, abused the Casecnan fund."

The complainants said that Castillo, after they received their share of the Casecnan RPT, instructed them while inside a hotel in nearby Solano town to issue blank checks. This was supposedly to facilitate the start of projects in their villages.

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2 suspects in shooting of Inquirer man arraigned

LUCENA CITY—FIVE MONTHS AFTER INQUIRER correspondent Delfin T. Mallari Jr. narrowly survived an attempt on his life, two suspects were arraigned at the sala of Judge Norma Chionglo Sia of Branch 56 of the Lucena Regional Trial Court here on Sept. 24.

The suspected gunman, Renato Sudla, and his alleged cohort, Armando Encanto, were seated on the front row while Mallari sat on the next.

Mallari claimed that the back of Sudla's body resembled that of the man who was riding on a motorcycle which sped away after he was shot.

The newsman was driving his car on his way to work in April when he was shot by a man riding in tandem with another man on a motorcycle.

Mallari was wounded in the left portion of his back. His companion, dzMM correspondent Johnny Glorioso, was unhurt.

The slug of the bullet fired from a .45 cal. pistol is still lodged near the spinal column.

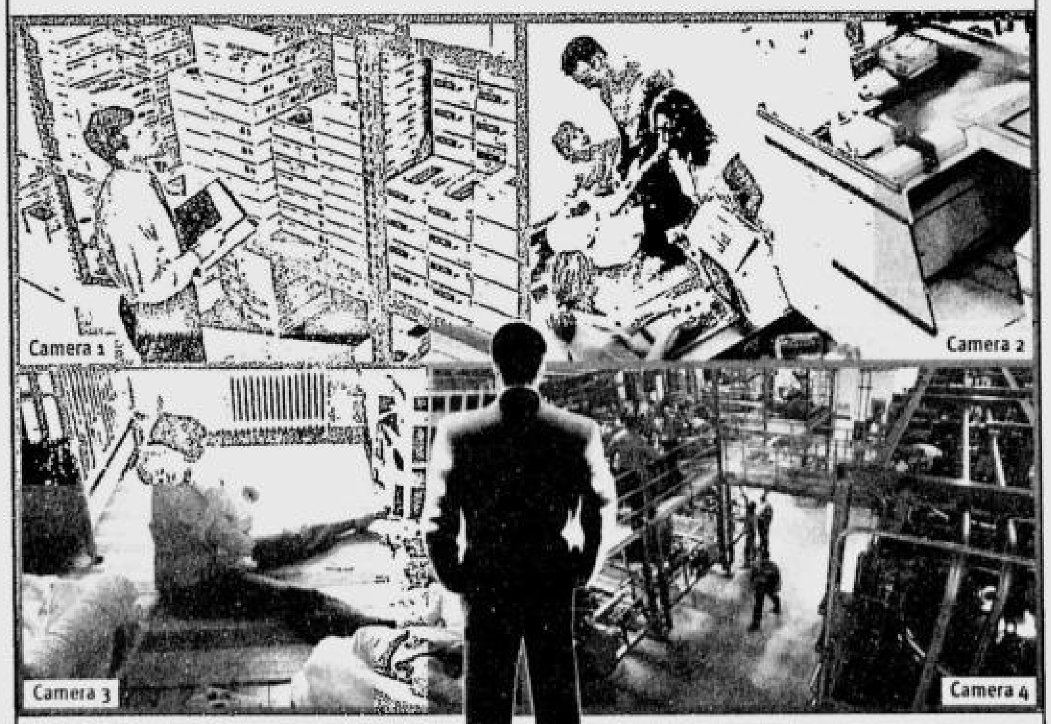
Sudla and Encanto are out on bail after paying P320,000 each after the court ordered their arrest for attempted and frustrated murder charges regarding the ambush.

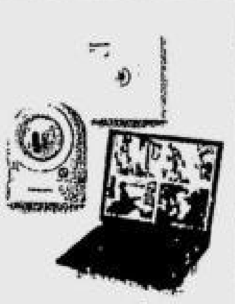
The suspects, who are both in their 40s, are members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity, the same fraternity to which incumbent Gov. Raffy Nantes belongs.

Mallari has accused Nantes of being the mastermind, which the governor has vehemently denied.

The newsman's lawyer, Vicente Joyas, agreed to have the arraignment reset for Nov. 27 after Encanto's lawyer Marcelino Arias Jr. moved for the deferment as they were filing a motion for review before the Department of Justice.

The INQUIRER tried to get the reaction of Sudla and Encanto but the two declined to be interviewed. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*





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New clash in South

COTABATO CITY—FRESH fighting between government troops and Moro Islamic Liberation Front forces erupted yesterday in Datu Saudi, Maguindanao.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, told the Inquirer by phone fighting broke out after suspected militiamen, backed by civilian volunteer organization (CVO) members, fired two 81-mm mortars on Barangay Kitango at 3 p.m.

He said no casualties were reported.

"One of the mortars landed near the headquarters of the joint local monitoring team and the international monitoring team. The other one landed near civilians. Until now, the exchange of gunfire is going on," Kabalu said.

He said the attack was triggered by the ambush of the Datu Saudi police chief by the group of Commander Datu Mando Tambulangan of the Moro National Liberation Front.

"The CVOs and militiamen accused us of protecting Tambulangan, that's why we were dragged into the incident. We have no tactical alliance with Tambulangan. Our troops were in a defensive position when they were attacked," Kabalu said.

"But based on our initial information, it's between two forces of the MILF operating in the area. We have no idea what's causing the conflict. We are closely watching if it will escalate along the national highway," he said.

Last week, suspected Moro rebels ambushed a convoy of international peace monitors and the military in the same town.

Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao

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SC finds teacher guilty of child abuse

Accused forced student into having sex with him, says court

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS FOUND A FORMER professor of an exclusive girls' school in Makati guilty of child abuse for seducing his 17-year-old student in 1997.

The high tribunal's Sept. 21 ruling affirmed the Court of Appeals decision convicting Michael Malto—who used to teach philosophy at the Assumption College—of violating the child abuse law for having sexual intercourse with and committing lascivious acts on his student.

The high court, however, imposed a stiffer penalty on Malto by sentencing him to a minimum prison term of 14 years and 8 months to 20 years. It also ordered him to pay the victim P100,000 in civil indemnity and moral damages.

The appellate court earlier imposed a minimum prison sentence of 8 years and one day to 17 years, 4 months and a day on the former professor.

Based on court records, Malto and his student, who was then only 17 years old, had sex on two occasions in

SC FINDS/ A24

Makati honors 101-year-old grandmother

By DJ Yap

SHE HAS LITERALLY SEEN THE GROWTH of Makati City from the time it was still known as San Pedro Makati to its rise as the financial capital of the country.

Today, 101-year-old Paula Garcia-Samarista will be honored, along with two of her slightly younger peers, in a special ceremony at the Makati City Hall celebrating their longevity.

To mark the beginning of Senior Citizen's Week, the city famous for pampering its elderly residents will pay tribute to Garcia-Samarista, Melchora Oria-Ancheta, 97, and Mercedes Sarmiento-Belandres, 95.

Mayor Jejomar Binay will lead local officials in the ceremony to be conducted at the City Hall quadrangle, where the three will receive a cash reward and a certificate recognizing their status as the city's most senior inhabitants.

Garcia-Samarista was born on June 29, 1906 to the late Sinporosa Garcia of Culi-Culi, now known as Barangay Pio del Pilar, Makati.

Just five years before she was born, San Pedro Makati, with a population of just 2,500, was incorporated into the province of Rizal. On Feb. 28, 1914 , the Philippine Legislature passed a law shortening the name to just Makati.

Garcia-Samarista is the widow of the late Marcial Samarista, with whom she bore seven children. She has 22 grandchildren.

Ancheta, on the other hand, was born on Jan. 6, 1910 to the late Doroteo Oria and Fausta Medina of Bulangao, Pangasinan. At the age of 29, she married Nicolas Ancheta and bore three children, who produced for them 12 grandchildren.

Belandres, a pharmacist by profession, was born on Sept. 22, 1912 to Simeon Sarmiento and Justay Dimaandal of Batangas City.

A former Miss Batangas, she married Angel Belandres, an agriculture graduate from the University of the Philippines-Los Baños, with whom she had two children. She has four grandchildren.

Aside from honoring the city's oldest living residents, officials will visit elderly patients at the city run-hospital, the Ospital ng Makati in Barangay Pembo, and the Acute Care Center in Barangay Bel-Air.

The following day, a similar visit will be conducted at private hospitals, including the Makati Medical Center and St. Clare Hospital on Dian St., Barangay Palanan.

"Our visits and gift-giving will not only focus on our oldest residents, but on the elderly who are confined in these four hospitals, because they, too, deserve to be remembered on this special week dedicated to honor them," Binay said.

Each patient will receive a bag of groceries from the city government.

Other events for Senior Citizen's Week include a table tennis tournament at the Barangay Guadalupe Nuevo Covered Court on Oct. 3, and a "Hindi Pa Kami Laos" singing contest on Oct. 4 at the Mini Theater of the University of Makati.

On Oct. 5, the city will hold "Pasayaw ng mga Pasaway," a ballroom dance at the City Hall quadrangle, and a "Physical Fitness Day" on Oct. 6.

DID YOU KNOW

ON OCT. 1, 1975, more than 30,000 persons flocked to the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City to witness one of the greatest boxing fights of the century: The "Thrilla in Manila" match between heavyweights Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier.

The 15-round fight ended in a TKO win for Ali in the 14th round. He got $6 million for the fight, while Frazier pocketed $3 million.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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Suicide or murder? Cops probing police official's death

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

POLICE SAID THEY WERE still trying to determine whether or not there was foul play in the death of a Quezon City police official before midnight Saturday.

The body of Supt. Jose "Joe-Gar" Garcia, 51, commander of the Quezon City Police District's Station 8, was found by his son at the back of their house in Veterans Village, Barangay Pasang Tamo, Quezon City, at around 11:30 p.m.

Garcia's body bore a lone gunshot wound in the left chest. Scene of the Crime Operatives later found at the crime scene a cal. .45 pistol with serial number FG89126.

It was not immediately clear who the gun belonged to.

Garcia's son, Jericho, 15, told the police that around 30 minutes before the incident, he and his father bade each other goodnight.

They went into their respective rooms and then a few minutes later, Jericho said his father went inside his room, kissed him and bade him goodnight a second time.

He added that he was awakened later on by what sounded like a gunshot which came from their backyard. He said he went to his father's room but found it empty.

Jericho told the police that he then ran to the backyard where he saw his father's body lying on the ground.

The boy immediately asked for help from his relatives and neighbors who rushed the victim to the Malvar General Hospital.

Garcia, however, was pronounced dead on arrival at 12:15 a.m. by Dr. Manuel Lacuesta.

Although authorities have not ruled out suicide as the cause of the victim's death, they are also looking into the possibility that the police official could have been murdered.

San Juan U to open in June 2008

By Kristine L. Alave

THE SAN JUAN CITY GOVERNMENT has started constructing its own university, which is scheduled to open June next year, Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito said.

In a recent interview with reporters, Ejercito said the city government has started to renovate and refurbish the three-story, 20-room building vacated by the AMA Computer College in Barangay Batis, San Juan City, this year.

It has also begun securing permits from the Commission on Higher Education, he added. In the future, the local government hopes to build another wing for the school to accommodate 1,500 students.

Ejercito said the university will offer popular courses such as accounting, nursing, hotel management, and engineering.

He also added that there are plans to make the government-owned San Juan Medical Center a teaching hospital.

SC finds …

From page A23

1997 in a Pasay City motel.

The high tribunal noted that Malto had used his influence over the girl and had pressured her to have intercourse with him.

According to the Supreme Court, even though the girl had agreed to have sex with him, Malto could not use this as a defense because she was below 18 years old then.

"The mere act of having sexual intercourse or committing lascivious conduct with a child who is exploited in prostitution or subjected to sexual abuse constitutes the offense," it added.

Malto had also contended that he and the girl were in a relationship at that time, but the tribunal said this was immaterial.

"For purposes of sexual intercourse and lascivious conduct in child abuse cases under Republic Act 7610, the sweetheart defense is unacceptable. A child exploited in prostitution or subjected to other sexual abuse cannot validly give consent to sexual intercourse with another person," the high court said.

Dramatic career shift: From accountant to welder

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

TALES OF THE CITY

QUEZON CITY Councilor Bernadette Herrera-Dy (center) and Carlo Dimayuga III (third from left), Labor-Link president, check out a student's welding skills. PHOTOS BY AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ALPHA DASMARIÑAS WANTED to work abroad because her job as an accountant bored her.

Wanting a more challenging and unique job, she went back to school to study.

A strong advocate of women empowerment, Dasmariñas, 32, took up the challenge, taking a recourse often perceived as a man's job.

Not caring if she would be tagged as "one of the boys", she enrolled at the Labor-Link Technical Institute (Labor-Link), the first welding school in Quezon City put up to produce globally competitive welders.

"We had women, out-of-school youths and senior citizens in mind when we first thought of this project," said Bernadette Herrera-Dy, a Quezon City councilor and founder of the Bagong Henerasyon (BH) Foundation, the organization that helped put up Labor-Link last February to provide employment opportunities for the city's residents.

BH Foundation, created in 2002, coordinates efforts to tap potential workforce and develop people's skills. Dy said they were aware of the strong demand for male and female welders alike, and realized they could provide a steady supply only if there was a venue where people could get formal training in the trade.

Dasmariñas, who graduated last June, will start working as a welder for a real estate company in Makati City in a couple of weeks. "After getting experience here, I would definitely want to go abroad, too," she said.

According to Dy, Dasmariñas is only one of at least 50,000 welders in demand in and out of the country today.

Since the organization put up the welding school, the foundation has produced at least 280 graduates, 40 of whom are already working abroad. The organization either supports or helps students get sponsors for their studies or facilitates scholarship grants from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda).

Apart from being the pioneer welding school in the city, Labor-Link, located in Balintawak, Quezon City, also boasts of a big number of women students enrolled in the course alongside their male counterparts.

"The response has been overwhelming," the councilor told the INQUIRER. "High school graduates who never had the chance to continue their education can now do so with this program."

She added that even people who have not been able to go to school or those with no experience in welding can enroll as long as they show a genuine interest in learning the trade. Even people who already know how to weld but had no formal training can also enroll to get technical training, she said.

ALPHA Dasmariñas (left) and her classmate, Joan Gayapanao.

Dy noted that when they opened the welding school in February, there were only three female students out of 40 who enrolled. Today, she said, there are about 50 female students out of the 180 who signed up for the course.

"This is for the women, so I'm happy that we are seeing more female enrollees in school," she said. "But this does not mean we're discouraging men to enroll. They're very welcome to join."

Female welders are actually more preferred than males abroad, said Carlo Dimayuga III, president of Labor-Link. "This is because women have 'lighter' hands and more flexible wrists that tend to produce more polished work," he added.

He noted that women welders are also generally more patient than men so foreign companies prefer to hire them, especially for jobs that require extensive attention to intricate details.

Gene Madridano, one of the four instructors in the welding school, noticed that his female students are definitely at par, if not better, than his male students. "They're not just good at the application part, they're also good in the lecture portion. Men sometimes are not as focused in this area," he said.

Dimayuga said that this early, companies from Korea, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Taiwan, among others, have expressed interest in hiring their female graduates.

The basic course Shield Metal Arc Welding (SMAW) lasts for a total of 38 days or 304 hours, Carlo said. Classes are held from Mondays to Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students then have the option to take the next more advanced course called Gas Metal Arc Welding (GMAW).

The students who enroll in the program, Dimayuga pointed out, have to pay "virtually nothing" because everything is shouldered by Tesda. The course, for walk-ins or those who do not have scholarships, on the other hand, costs from P10,000 to P15,000.

Welders who graduate from Labor-Link are ready for hiring in any shipping, pipeline, real estate and construction company anywhere in the world, Madridano said.

According to Dasmariñas, "I am proud to be a welder. This is now my life. Years from now, I will come back here after gaining valuable experience abroad. Who knows, I may even start a welding business or put up my own welding school."

DY (fourth from right) poses with some of her women "scholars." Of the 180 students enrolled in the welding course, 50 are female.

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CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (sq.m.)	LOCATION	Floor Price
REAL ESTATE METRO MANILA				
AM-RP- 46	Residential lot (TCT No.T-100570) with bldg. & imp.	253	No. 23 Sangumay St. corner Mariposa St., Manuela Subd., Phase III-A Pamplona, Las Piñas City	P1,560,300.00
BATANGAS				
PSM -01	Two (2) adjoining lots (TCT Nos. 108495 & 108496)	3,165	Ayala Highway, Brgy. Balintawak, North Lipa City	P29,118,000.00
NUEVA ECIJA				
AM-RP- 48	Residential lot (TCT No.T-118073) with bldg. & imp.	100	Lot 15-Blk.1, Vista Amor Subd., Brgy. Bangad, Cabanatuan City	P 301,000.00

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ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI–October 1, 2007)

METRO Citizen's call

0918-8985566

BARANGAY HALL ON MANILA SIDEWALK

Lorenzo Gadon of New Manila, Quezon City, texted this message: "There is a barangay hall standing on the sidewalk of Bambang Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila. The presence of the structure has discouraged prospective buyers from taking a look at the property behind it. The owners of the lot, who are my clients, said its value and market appeal had also been diminished because of the illegal structure. A notice of demolition from the City Engineer's Office of Manila was already sent to the barangay chairman several years ago, but it was allegedly ignored. The chairman reportedly said he had the permission of the former mayor to build the structure. We trust that Mayor Lim takes action on this problem, believing in his guiding philosophy that 'the law applies to all, otherwise none at all.'" CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Street signs needed, Mayor Bernabe

MAY WE bring to the attention of our mayor, Florencio Bernabe Jr., the need for street signs in the following streets in Parañaque City: No Parking Anytime sign on Rodriguez Street in Barangay Moonwalk, where inconsiderate residents park their vehicles even during rush hour, and the same sign on St. Peter Street, also a busy thoroughfare with a *talipapa* (wet market) and school in the area; a Slow Down sign between Ireland and Iceland streets in Better Living Subdivision, and a Full Stop sign on Don Bosco corner India Streets. There is also a drainage problem on St. Peter Street when the streets are flooded because of heavy rains. Thanks for your help.

WILMA ALO, Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque City

Messy customer service project

THE MAYNILAD-DMCI project in Barangay 443, Zone 44, Sampaloc, Manila, has resulted in muddy roads, clogged drainage and stagnant water overflowing in the streets. Can improvements be made without creating a mess? This is so inconvenient for both motorists and pedestrians. Paging Maynilad or Mayor Lim!

CATHY ARARACAP, 45, Sampaloc, Manila

Street corner on Taft Avenue used as passenger pickup terminal

JEEPNEYS are obstructing the flow of traffic at the corner of Taft Avenue and Padre Faura Street in front of the Supreme Court building because drivers like to pick up passengers in the area even when they are not allowed to do so. Please help us put a stop to this obnoxious practice. Thanks a lot.

JOSEPH, 27, Padre Faura, Manila

Metro Feedback

DPWH responds to Citizens Call complaint

THIS refers to the published text message of Ms Suzzane Datuin (Metro page A20, Aug. 20), regarding her request to immediately fix the potholes on Osmeña Highway.

According to Department of Public Works and Highways South Manila district engineer Mikunug Macud, as of Aug. 23, the maintenance section of their office has completed the patching of potholes on the said section of the road. Macud added that they had also completed the repair of potholes on Roxas Boulevard, Edsa T.M. Kalaw, P. Burgos, Buendia Extension, Taft Avenue, MIA Road and Quirino Avenue.

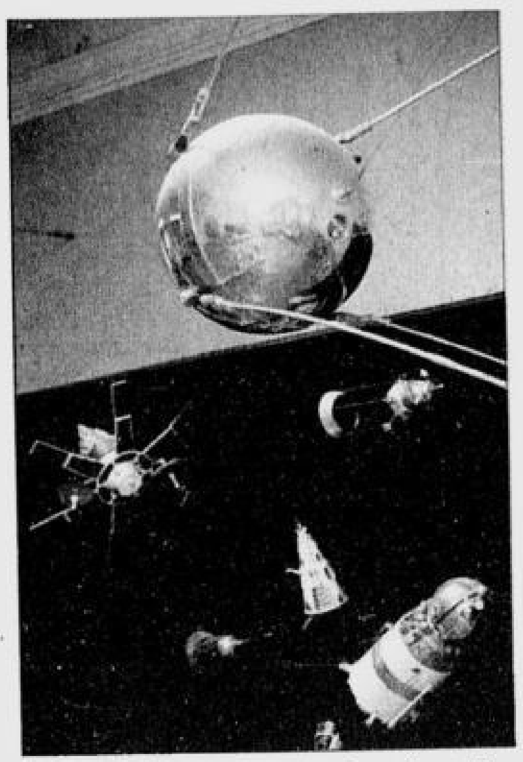
We hope we have clarified the issue for the benefit of the people that we both serve. Thank you very much and more power.

Elizabeth Pilorin
OIC-Chief, Public Information Division
Department of Public Works and Highways

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Asia seen beating US in next Space Race



A REPLICA of the first Russian Sputnik satellite (top), which was launched on Oct. 4, 1957, to start a new era of space exploration. AFP

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA—FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE launch of Sputnik left the United States scrambling to play catch-up in the first Space Race, US scientists fear history may be repeating itself as Asia emerges as the rising force in space exploration.

While the achievements of space programs run by China, Japan and India are modest in comparison to the milestones set by the United States and former Soviet Union, experts at a recent conference in Pasadena believe it is only a matter of time before Asia leads the field.

China, which sent a man into space for the first time in 2003, plans to launch its own moon probe before the end of the year, followed by India in the first half of 2008. Japan kick-started the Asian lunar race on Sept. 14 when it successfully launched its first lunar orbiter.

While China and India have raised the possibility of a manned lunar mission within the next decade, the United States has vowed to return to the moon in 2020, 48 years after the last US visit. Nasa meanwhile has set the ambitious target of wanting to put a man on Mars in 2037.

"When we celebrate 100 years of Sputnik, we might celebrate the 20th anniversary of man landing on Mars," Frank Griffin, Nasa's chief administrator said recently.

But many astrophysicists, space engineers and other high-ranking US scientists do not share Griffin's optimism, pointing to waning interest in space exploration amongst young Americans and a lack of government investment in developing elite scientists.

"In America, contrary to our self-image, we are no longer leaders but simply players," said Neil De-Grasse Tyson, the director of the Hayden Planetarium in a recent editorial. "We've moved backward just by standing still."

The numbers of new scientists in Asian countries are eclipsing those in the United States. In 2004, around 500,000 engineers graduated in China, 200,000 in India and only 70,000 in the US, according to a report from the National Academy of Sciences released this year.

The authors of the report—"Rising Above the Gathering Storm"—warned the United States risked losing its position as the leading technological superpower if present trends continued.

"Although many people assume that United States will always be a world leader in science and technology, this may not continue to be the case," the report warned. "We fear the abruptness with which a lead in science and technology can be lost—and the difficulty of recovering a lead once lost, if indeed it can be regained at all.

"This nation must prepare with great urgency to preserve its strategic and economic security."

According to Ares Rosakis, a professor of Aeronautics at the prestigious California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, the scientific community has struggled to capture the imagination of younger generations.

"We have failed to communicate and infuse the excitement of space into our younger generation," Rosakis said.

Charles Elachi, the director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, echoed Rosakis' comments.

"Clearly, there are so many distractions in our society but every time we have kids visiting JPL and we talk about space exploration, showing them Mars rovers, having astronauts, they get completely taken by it," Elachi said.

"The challenge we have now in our society is the wide distraction that kids get from networks, games, iPods, YouTube and so on. We need to figure a way to get their attention."

Frank Fernandez, director emeritus of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, blamed a lack of investment in human resources.

"We need to invest in people," Fernandez warned. "We don't have people in the pipeline." *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Nuclear envoys reach 'comprehensive' N. Korea deal

BEIJING—Envoys from six nations struck an agreement Sunday on the next phase of disabling North Korea's nuclear weapons program, which the United States hailed as comprehensive and detailed. The provisional agreement will now go back to the governments for approval, and negotiators will resume their talks here in a few days so the deal can be sealed, the US and other envoys said. No specifics of the agreement were released. "The joint statement was very comprehensive," US negotiator Christopher Hill told reporters, referring to the agreement outlined by China, which is hosting the talks.

AFP

Magnitude 7.1 quake in the Pacific near Guam

TOKYO—A strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.1 occurred in the Pacific Ocean near the island of Guam, the Japan Meteorological Agency said Sunday. No injuries, damage or tsunami were immediately reported. The Hong Kong Observatory said the epicenter appeared to be about 350 km south-southeast of Guam. The Japanese agency said the earthquake was centered near Guam, a US territory, and occurred at 11:09 a.m. Japan time. Japan's agency did not issue an official tsunami warning, but said there may be a chance of one near the epicenter.

AP

India remains outsourcing favorite, says survey

BANGALORE, India—India remains the favored technology outsourcing destination, an industry report said Sunday, amid concerns a rising rupee and soaring wages would blunt the country's competitive edge. A study by industry publication Global Services and investment advisory firm Tholons put the Indian cities of Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune at the top of a list of 15 emerging outsourcing destinations for global companies. Calcutta at number five and Chandigarh at number nine were the other two Indian locations on the list, which contained three Chinese and two Vietnamese cities as well. The three hot cities for outsourcing from China were Shanghai at number eight, Beijing at 10 and Shenzhen at 13. Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi were put at number six and number 12. Cebu in the Philippines came in at number four, the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo at seven, Cairo at 11, Buenos Aires at 14 and Sao Paulo at 15, the study's sponsors said in a statement released in Bangalore. The list is based on criteria such as scale and quality of workforce, financial infrastructure, risk environment and quality of life.

AFP

Experts at FDA in US urge firm action on child drugs

WASHINGTON—Safety experts for the Food and Drug Administration urged the agency on Friday to consider an outright ban on over-the-counter, multi-symptom cough and cold medicines for children under 6. The recommendation, in a 356-page safety review, is the clearest signal yet that the agency may take strong action against the roughly 800 popular medicines marketed in the United States under names like Toddler's Dimetapp, Triaminic Infant and Little Colds. The next step in the process will be a meeting of outside experts on Oct. 18 and 19 to examine the medicines' safety and offer recommendations to the agency. In the new safety review, the FDA's experts suggested that all "infant" cough and cold formulations be removed from the market, and that the droppers, cups and syringes included with products for children be standardized to reduce the risks of confusion and overdose.

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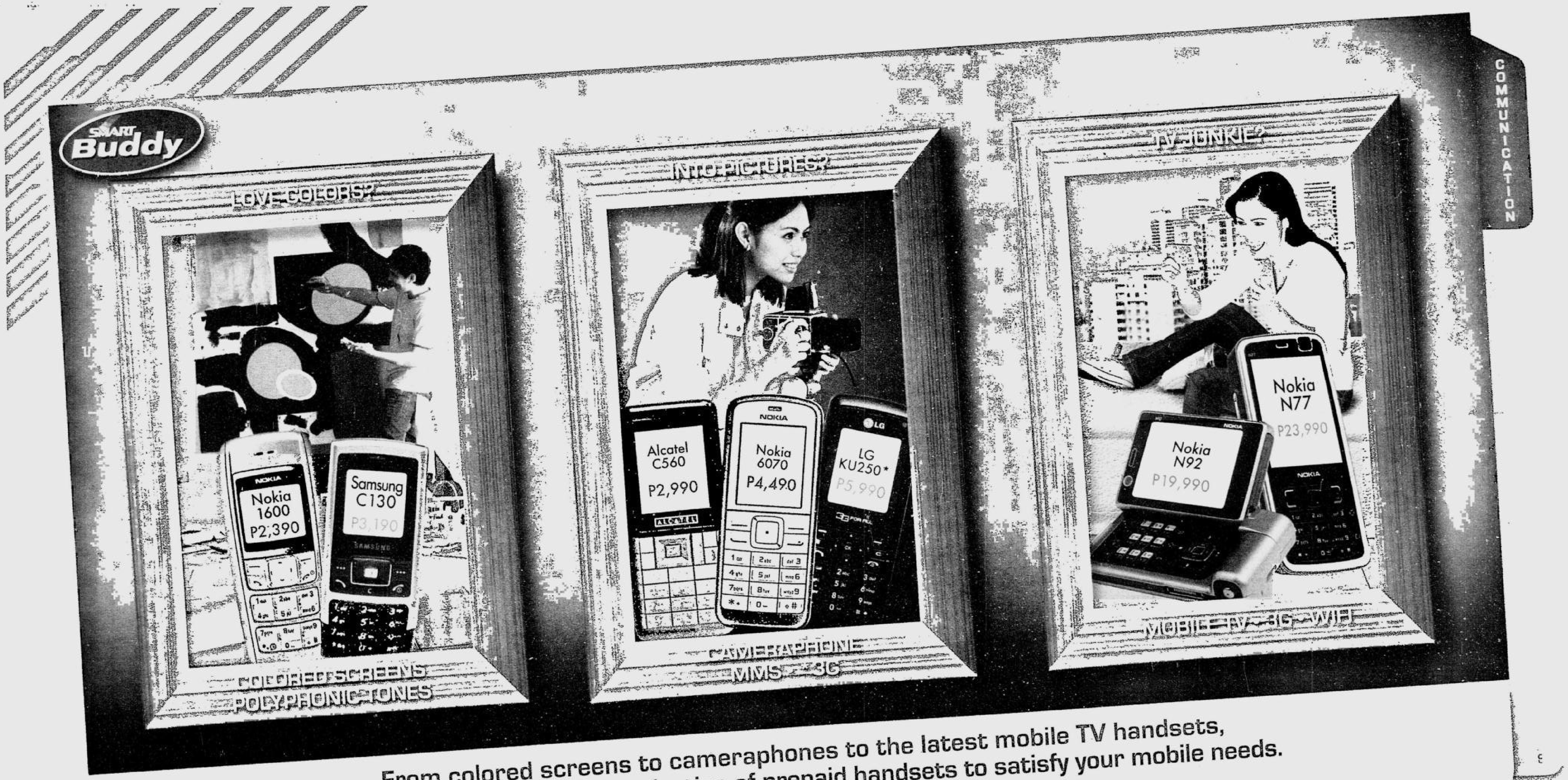
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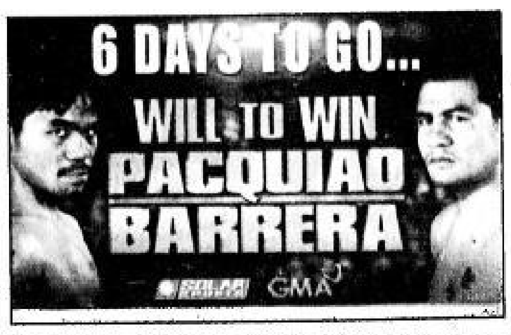

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Archers sew up win that matters most

Trim Eagles to nail 2nd title slot

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT WAS THE BIGGEST WINning margin in the rivalry that more than lived up to its hype this season. And the win also turned out to be the biggest of them all.

GAMES THURSDAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
3 p.m.—Univ. of the East vs La Salle
(Game 1, best-of-three Finals)

La Salle ended its rare five-game saga with arch rival Ateneo on top as the Green Archers turned back the Blue Eagles, 65-60, yesterday to clinch the last UAAP Finals berth in front of a 23,000-strong sellout crowd at the Araneta Coliseum.

"This is the only time that two is greater than three," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren. "They beat us three times (this season), but we beat them when it counted the most."

La Salle senior guard Cholo Villanueva found the seams in the Ateneo defense, drilling in nine of his 13 points in the fourth quarter to keep the Archers in control.

"This is the 'welcome back' party for us," said Villanueva, referring to the Archers' impressive return to the Finals after serving a one-year suspension last season.

"Coach Franz said to just control the tempo of the game, make good stops and convert it into offense. It was all about controlling the tempo of the game."

But a more arduous road lies ahead as the Archers face the undefeated University of the East Warriors in the best-of-three championship series. Game 1 will kick off at 3 p.m. on Thursday at the Araneta Coliseum.

The title duel has its own interesting sidebar as Franz squares off with younger brother and UE mentor Dindo Pumaren.

"It's a long overdue series with Dindo," said Franz after nailing the second title slot in front of 23,319 fans, the biggest crowd ever recorded in Philippine basketball history.

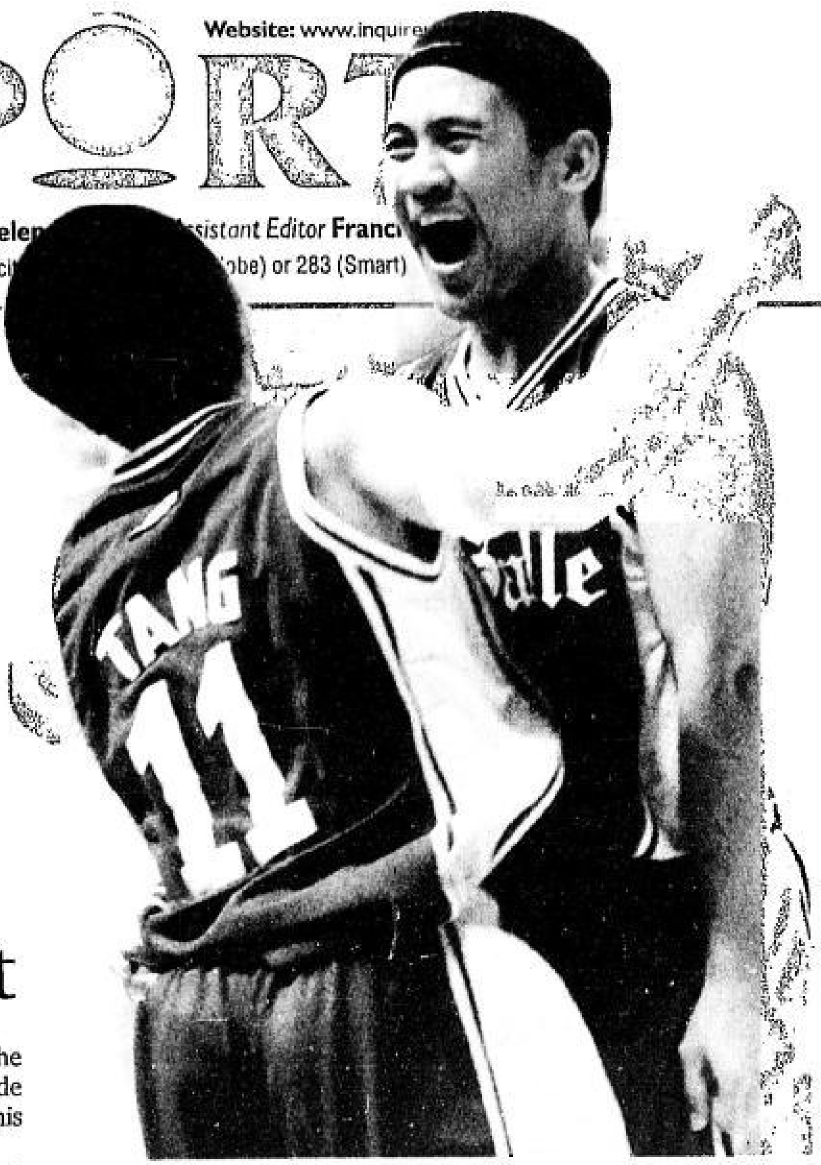
Offense failed the Eagles at crunchtime as the Eagles shot an abysmal 20 percent—2 out of 10 field goal attempts—in the fourth quarter. But they stayed in the game by scoring 12 of their 17 markers in the final quarter from the foul line.

Pumaren said the Archers made sure to tighten their defensive screws in the closing minutes.

"This is one game where we really responded well playing defensively," he said. "The players tend to relax, but the players made sure that no way are we going to relax this time. We played smart down the stretch."

The Archers took off early in the fourth quarter with a pair of Villanueva layups sand-

ARCHERS/ A29


TY Tang (left) and JV Casio celebrate the victory that brought the Archers to the Finals.
AUGUST DELA CRUZ

The scores:

LA SALLE 65—Villanueva 13, Tang 12, Maierhofer 12, Casio 10, Malabes 5, Walsham 4, Ferdinand 2, Cua 2, Mangahas 0, Co 0, Barua 0.

ATENEO 60—Arao 14, Tiu 10, Salamat 10, Baclao 7, Al-Hussaini 6, Reyes 5, Long 4, Baldos 2, Escueta 2, Monfort 0, Laterre 0.

Quarters: 16-14, 29-26, 48-43, 65-60

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Indelible Ink gobbles up rivals

CARMONA, CAVITE—INDELIBLE Ink ran away with the second leg of the Juvenile Fillies Stakes series yesterday after gobbling up the field early and breezing home under Jeffryl Zarate at the San Lazaro Leisure Park here.

The chestnut daughter of Best Of Luck out of Seaquin clocked 1 minute and 32 seconds for 1,500 meters.

Indelible Ink's quarter clocking of 18, 24', 23' and 26 destroyed the field, with coupler Anonymous, under Patty Dilema, nipping Love Story and Ferdinand Raquel for second about eight lengths behind.

The fifth straight win was worth P900,000 for owner Hermie Esguerra. And it sparked hopes of a potential Triple Crown champion this early.

"I don't want to think about the Triple Crown at this time," an indisposed Esguerra told the INQUIRER. *Musong R. Castillo*

SPORTSWATCH

PCAP derby unfolds

THE PINOY COCKERS ASSOCIation of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-stag derby series gets underway today at Makati Coliseum with some 80 matches backed by B-Meg Derby Ace and Gran Matador. Efren Canlas of Pampanga (Bacolor Gold) topped the first leg on Sept. 5 while Ting Arioza of Bicol (Arioza Batzam) won the second on Sept. 1).

P2.5M pot in SJC tilt

THE SM FARMS OPEN 6-STAG derby, with P2.5 million at stake, starts today at San Juan Coliseum with some 80 fights. The six-day stagfest (Oct. 1, 3, 6, 8, 10 and 13) is hosted by Sam Mendoza, Boy Torres and Doc Jovy and supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Today's 3-stag elims dangles a day-prize of P80,000 for 3-pointers.

Pacquiao approval rating plummets

By Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—HOTLY FAVORED MANNY PACquiao prepared to shift to war mode yesterday, a full week before his big battle in Las Vegas, but the Sportsbook here registered a considerable dip in his bet approval rating.

Pacquiao's windy workman's hair is set to be trimmed today, the goatee he had grown in training shaven, but there were contrasting speculations on why the enormous odds favoring him to repeat over Marco Barrera slid.

From a whopping minus-350, it's down to minus-290, meaning you'd need to wager $290 for a possible return of only $100.

Barrera, on the other hand, is plus-230, a $100 bet yielding $230.

One guess on why adventurous fight fans, including Mexicans, have opted to suddenly pull their bet on the Pacman were well-founded reports on his defensive lapses, as shown in his sparring.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/MANOLO TRINIDAD

CERVANTES

Twenty-one-year-old Daniel Cervantes, an alternate in the 2004 Mexico Olympi c team, banged it up again with Pacquiao yesterday and repeated his earlier claim that the RP boxing superhero was not exactly untouchable.

"I got him again several times, but today is my best day so far," claimed the good-looking fighter with a 10-0 record.

Cervantes, who finished his chore pretty fired-up, said he felt Pacquiao even got mad at one point when he tagged him with good head shots.

Pacquiao, who has totalled more than 130 rounds of sparring, closes the drill with a final session Monday.

Another guess on why Pacquiao has lost bet backing was the incisive primer shown by HBO after the classic Taylor-Pavlik championship bout from Atlantic City yesterday.

There was a portion in the primer that had Freddie Roach flatly denying Pacquiao's claim that his sudden departure from here to train in Cebu early last month, was pre-planned.

What, however, stood out in the presentation were the distractions Pacquiao had to undergo, a total opposite of Barrera's placid training in Guadalajara.

Pacquiao was to hear mass Sunday and receive departure blessings at the Christ the King church off Rossmore here, a kilometer from Wild Card.

He got a merry, if sometimes wild, send-off from adoring fans at the end of his workout yesterday.

"We did it only twice," Roach later told the INQUIRER of the special crushing combination—a spear and slash— which they have been trying to perfect and use as the main weapon against Barrera.

There was hardly an alarm inside Team Pacquiao over the shift of betting preferences, as specified in the website bodog.com.

Super ready Pacman needs big luck

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—VETERAN ACTOR Eddie Gutierrez, trim, tall and handsome in a leather jacket, visited the Wild Card gym on Friday for Manny Pacquiao's training and had some female heads turning.

He said he talked to Pacquiao the previous evening to ask about his preparedness.

"Ready? Super, super ready," Pacquiao exclaimed.

Gutierrez, together with his wife Annabelle Rama, was the first in a slew of celebrities and politicians expected to trek to Las Vegas to cheer for the Pacman.

He said his friend Rudy Fernandez should be here no later than Sunday.

* * *

Chavit Singson should be heading for Vegas anytime this week.

Wakee Salud, whose new gym in Cebu Pacman used in his training, checked in at Vagabond Inn, Pacquiao's former quarter, Friday.

Rod Nazario, mainly responsible for launching Pacquiao's career from Wild Card, is due Wednesday.

But the biggest bulk of Pacquiao rooters will come from various US cities, with others planing in from the Carribean and South America.

* * *

Of course, the main aim of their trip is to witness Pacquiao win, and bask in the predicted victory.

But, mind you, don't these footloose fans also bother to bring with them some sort of a charm to the fight site?

Maybe yes, maybe no.

Some would say there's no need anymore for a good-luck item because all Pacquiao has to do is show up on fight night.

They would say Barrera is so washed up he would be lucky to still be standing by the 8th round.

Yes, it has come to that wild point when Pacman fanatics have long buried and forgotten the possibility of a Pacquiao loss on Oct. 6.

OK, these diehards cannot be accused of deluding themselves because a reality check would show how Pacquiao and Barrera went separate ways since their first meeting in November 2003, won by the RP hero by an 11th-round knockout.

* * *

Super, super ready. Yes, but still there's this one Pacman admirer who went out of his way to wish the great Pinoy warrior good luck.

This happened late Friday at the Mayflower restaurant, a Pacquiao favorite in Chinatown.

Salud herded some members of Team Pacquiao to the place where they had a sumptuous lauriat.

What a great night of feasting ahead of the big fight.

Now, as they prepared for a burpy exit, the owner of the place returned to the cash register to retrieve the amount paid for the feast.

This totalled $70, hefty discount included.

The owner then put the dollar bills inside a red, crispy Chinese envelop with golden signs, folded the thing and asked Jojo Sta. Theresa, a Pacman close-in aide formerly with Wakee Salud, to give it to Pacquiao.

Hold it, the owner said, Manny must open the envelop only in the dugout on fight night.

* * *

So what will Pacquiao do with a measly $70, when he parts away daily with no less than $500 for each lunch at the Nats Thai restaurant near Wild Card?

Now, don't tell that to Señor Barrera. Whatever luck there's left in the boxing, Barrera would most likely advise, the Pacman must scoop up.

You see, there's this prognosis that the separate paths Barrera and Pacquiao have taken since their last fight could well foretell the directions the rematch would take.

The experts may indeed be right.

Pacquiao has since improved vastly while Barrera has gone nowhere.

Read on please. Last heard, Barrera was claiming this second fight would never be an easy one for Pacquiao. Never.

He said it will be a totally different, vastly prepared Barrera who will report for war at the Mandalay Bay Resort/Casino next Saturday.

And only $70 worth of luck, based on the training trends in both camps, may not be enough.

TSHOMLEE Go (main photo)
his Egyptian foe. Inset; Go is fl

Chinese d

A TOURNAMENT-RECORD
win in the second round pr
last hurrah for Efren "Bat
Francisco "Django" Bustar
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Audacious Go bags Olympic t'kwondo slot

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND—TSHOMLEE Go managed to beat a path to Beijing on Saturday, but Mary Antoinette Rivero got lost along the way.

Go survived a heavy draw strewn with Olympic, World and Asian champions to snag a bronze medal while Rivero was waylaid by a Croatian in her march to the semifinals of the World Taekwondo Championships here.

"*Lahat na po ng santo tinawag ko* (I called all the saints)," said the 26-year-old Go, while anxiously waiting for the referee to declare who goes to next year's Beijing Olympics following his sudden-death duel with Egyptian dynamo Tamer Salah Bayoumi in the battle for the bronze medal in the 58kg match.

The University of Santo Tomas education graduate jumped with joy when the referee raised his hand while the handful of Filipinos here cheered him on at the M.E.N. Arena.

That capped his six-fight odyssey in the world meet where he had to get through a Yemeni, a Filipino representing Denmark and a World Cup and Asian champ from Thailand.

He lost in the semifinals, though, via a referee-stopped-contest 7-0 rout to eventual champion Chu Mu-yen of Chinese Taipei, the reigning Olympic champ who booted out two-time world titlist Juan Antonio Ramos of Spain.

Go and Bayoumi first fought to a 1-1 deadlock in their sudden-death clash. After both failed to score in the two-minute second extension, the corner referees decided the victor.

The 19-year-old Rivero lost in another sudden-death to Sandra Saric of Croatia, who booked the Olympic ticket in the -67kg.

Rivero had earlier bundled out Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ivona Brnic, 2-0, and Ukraine's Cherkun Olga, 5-1, to reach the quarterfinals.

Alexander Briones gets going in the men's -80kg Sunday. Kathleen Eunice Alora bowed out in the first round of the -49kg last Friday.

Go first demolished Yemen's Akram Ahmed Abdullah, 4-1, then took a walkover against Iraq's Ahmed Kasim Kadim to advance against Philip Reyes of Denmark whom he also beat.

The Filipino Southeast Asian Games champion and Asian Games silver medal winner next nailed a place in the semifinals by beating Thai favorite Thai Khawlaor Chutchawal, 2-1.

MARC ANTHONY REYES

anxiously awaits the call for a sudden death match with
anked by coaches Roberto Cruz (left) and Rocky Samson.

ethrone Bata, Django

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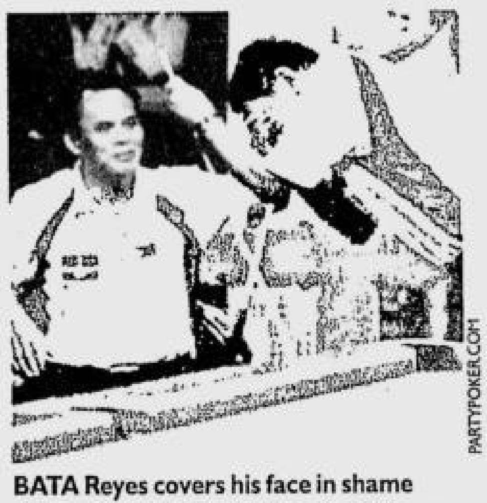
Croatia, 8-0, in the round of 16 after they started with an 8-6 win over Scotland.

The Chinese, who had earlier beaten South Africa and France, advanced against Japan's Satoshi Kawabata and Naoyuki Oi, who eliminated Singapore's Chang Ken Kwan and Toh Lian Han, 9-5.

The other semifinal encounter pits Canada, represented by Fil-Canadian Edwin Montal and Alain Martel, against Finland's Mika Immonen and Markus Juva.

The Canadians ousted Belgium's Noel Bruynooghe and Serge Das, 9-4, while the Finns booted out Switzerland's Marco Tschudi and Dimitri Jungo, also 9-4.



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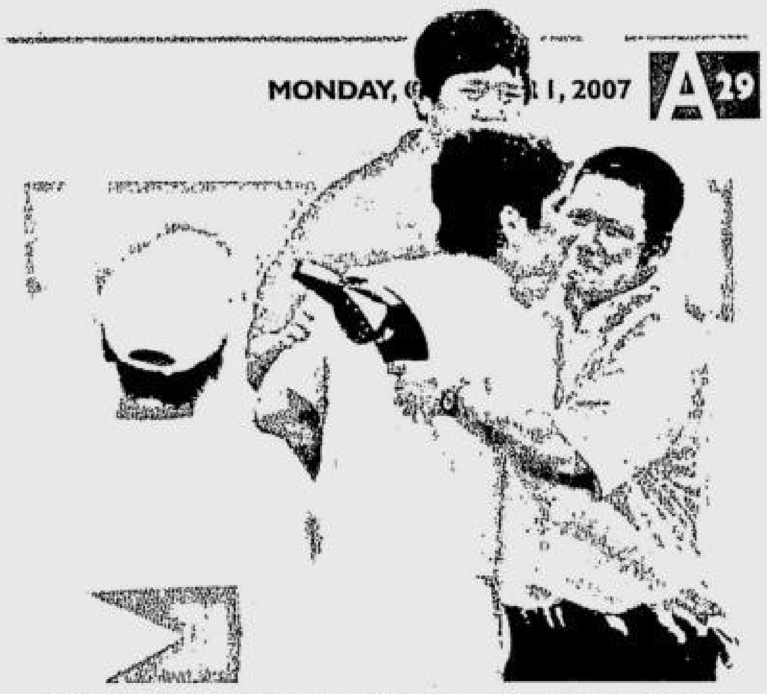
BATA Reyes covers his face in shame after missing a shot against the Chinese as Django Bustamante consoles him.



A TEARFUL Tony Lascuña (right) embraces Gerald Rosales who canned the decisive birdie putt on the last hole. ASIAN TOUR NEWS

Last-hole bird does it for Rosales, Lascuña

KUALA LUMPUR—THE FILipino duo of Tony Lascuña and Gerald Rosales birdied the final hole to salvage a one-under-par 71 Sunday and earn the fifth and final ticket to next month's Omega Mission Hills World Cup by the slimmest of margins.

Lascuña and Rosales pulled off the courageous feat on the 18th hole of Kota Permai Golf and Country Club as they pipped the Malaysian and Singaporean pairs a single stroke.

The Filipinos' nail-biting finish in the Fortis Challenge, nearly overshadowed the victory of Thai hotshots Thongchai Jaidee and Prayad Marksaeng.

The Thais fired a final-round 64 in the foursomes to finish with a 30-under-par 258 total, three shots clear of the Netherlands' Maarten Lafeber and Robert-Jan Derksen (67).

With the top five teams qualifying for the World Cup, New Zealand's Richard Lee and Stephen Scahill claimed third with a 67, while South Koreans Lee Sung and Lee Seung-ho finished fourth after a 69.

Lascuña and Rosales survived a double bogey scare on the 16th hole after finding the water to finish fifth on 268. A glorious chip from a difficult lie by Lascuña on the 18th set Rosales up for a short birdie putt.

Asian Tour News

Archers nail win that matters . . .

From page A27

wiching a TY Tang triple for the biggest lead of the game, 55-46, with 5:30 minutes left.

Eric Salamat ended the Ateneo drought with a three-point play, but Villanueva responded 33 seconds later with a triple on top of the key to push the gap back to nine, 58-49.

The Eagles came up with one last gasp as rookie center Nonoy Baclao surprisingly nailed a triple to trim the margin by a basket, 62-60, with 13.6 seconds left.

But the rally proved futile as JV Casio and Rico Maierhofer converted three of their four foul shots to cushion the Archers' lead in the last 11 seconds.

"There's nothing to be ashamed of," said Ateneo coach Norman Black, who emerged from the dugout more than an hour after the game. "As far as I can remember, you guys didn't even give us a chance to reach this far."

Outside the coliseum, scalpers also had a field day with patron tickets going ridiculously high at P6,000 apiece.

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TIGER Woods hits from a bunker on the 13th hole during his four-ball match at the Presidents Cup golf tournament at the Royal Montreal Golf Club. REUTERS

Americans near victory

MONTREAL—PHIL MICKELSON showed Woody Austin how to stay dry, and the Americans blew the International team out of the water Saturday in the Presidents Cup to build the largest lead in seven years.

The United States swept the alternate-shot matches in the crisp morning, then turned back an International rally with one of its own to split the afternoon fourballs and build a 14 1/2-7 1/2 lead going into the 12 singles matches Sunday.

Mickelson and Austin combined to birdie their last two holes to steal a half-point, Tiger Woods recorded two blowouts with different partners, and Stewart Cink made all the clutch putts to turn a loss into another point that filled the scoreboard with US red numbers.

It now appears that for the second time in three weeks, the Sunday chase for a cup will be anticlimactic. Woods wrapped up the FedEx Cup at East Lake before the weekend arrived, and only the greatest comeback in Presidents Cup history will keep this event from turning into a snoozer at Royal Montreal.

"It's not over," International captain Gary Player said. "But things don't look too good. The egg is not sunny-side up."

Indeed, the International squad looked fried.

Mike Weir and Ernie Els had the only easy time in the afternoon and the deflating day ended with Vijay Singh curling in a 4-foot par putt that kept another International team from a collapse.

US captain Jack Nicklaus nodded his head and clapped his hands with each point moving the Americans closer to their first outright victory on the road in the Presidents Cup, and their first in any cup since winning the Ryder Cup at The Belfry in 1993.

Mickelson provided the most entertaining moment when his ball caromed off the hill and into a shallow spot in the water left of the 15th green. Austin, his partner in the fourball match, walked over to look at the situation and shrugged his shoulders as if to say, "Your turn to give it a try." A day earlier, Austin lost his balance trying such a shot and wound up face-first in the water.

Mickelson borrowed the size-14 sneaker from his caddie to put on his left foot and go into the water. The ball tumbled back into the hazard, but at least Lefty didn't take the fall. AP

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Anand bags chess world title anew

MEXICO CITY—INDIA'S VISHWANATHAN Anand was crowned world champion of chess Saturday as he won the marathon tournament in Mexico City that brought together eight of the game's best players.

Known as the "Tiger from Madras, Anand, 37, replaced Vladimir Kramnik of Russia as champion, winning the tournament on points after tying a match with Hungarian Peter Leko on the 14th day of the contest.

"I enjoy this new feeling of being world champion," he said. "I am just very happy with my game, we had a good team, I felt very well, my second (coach) helped me (with) a lot of interesting ideas, everything clicked."

ANAND AFP

Kramnik, who saw the championship slip from his gasp on Friday after a tie, finished in second followed by Israeli Boris Gelfand.

Anand, who learned to play chess at the age of six, had previously won the world championship in 2000, but the achievement was valued less since at the time the chess world was split between two rival world titles.

Anand said both victories were equally sweet. "For me it is not different or more important than the 2000 title, for me they are both lovely memories," he said Saturday. *AFP*

Hamilton triumphs

OYAMA, JAPAN—LEWIS HAMILTON won a wet-and-wild Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday to move to the verge of the Formula One title with two races to go after his main rival and McLaren teammate Fernando Alonso crashed out of the race.

Heikki Kovalainen of Renault was second and Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen finished third in a rain affected race that started behind the pace car and had spins, bumps and crashes throughout its 67-laps.

Hamilton now has a 12-point lead in the drivers standings—107-95. He can win the world title in his rookie season at China next week if he finishes with at least an 11-point lead over defending champion Alonso.

Alonso can still win the title but needs a lot of luck.

His luck deserted him at the Fuji Speedway when he spun and hit the wall hard on the 42nd lap. His car stopped in the middle of the track with debris around him. The Spaniard was helped out of the car and stayed behind a fence for a few laps to contemplate what happened before leaving the scene of the accident. *AP*

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	Otis Mall Parking Lot	Butuan City

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Purefoods shops for point guard, eyes Cablay

By Musong R. Castillo

PUREFOODS, AFTER LOSING Paul Artadi to Barangay Ginebra, is still shopping around for a back-up point guard, hoping to be able to come to terms with Red Bull for Brandon Cablay in time for the Oct. 14 opening of the PBA Philippine Cup.

With Roger Yap starting at the point and rookie free agent Chico Lanete coming off the bench, the Purefoods coaching staff is looking to lure the Fil-Am Cablay from Red Bull through a trade.

Cablay, once the Slam Dunk King, was traded to the Barako as part of the Larry Fonacier deal.

But Red Bull hasn't signed Cablay with just two weeks left before the season start, hoping to get a better deal for the high-flying playmaker.

Purefoods dealt away Artadi after a spat between the player and coach Ryan Gregorio.

Meanwhile, a trade that would have seen Yancy de Ocampo going back to his amateur team Welcoat did not materialize.

The Dragons had tried offering veteran acquisition Nic Belasco to Talk 'N Text, which declined and stuck it out with the 6-foot-9 De Ocampo.

In another development, Estong Ballesteros and Don Dulay completed the Welcoat roster after signing short-term deals over the weekend.

The Philippine Cup opens next Sunday with San Miguel, the runner-up last year, colliding with a souped-up Air21 side in the only game scheduled after techno-inspired opening ceremonies at 4:30 p.m.

Porras, Dapudong down Indons

GLENN PORRAS AND EDREN DAPUDONG of the Braveheart Boxing Stable retained their respective WBO Asia Pacific Youth titles with contrasting wins over their Indonesian foes Saturday night at the jampacked Mlang Gym in Mlang, North Cotabato. Porras started strong early but settled for a unanimous decision win over Rivo Rengkung. Dapudong, however, looked brilliant in stopping the stocky Jack Amisa with a big right for a third-round technical knockout win. Meanwhile, Apol Suico of the Rex "Wakee" Salud Stable was knocked out in the first round by Moruti Mthalane in their fight for the vacant WBC International flyweight title at the Park Station in Johannesburg, South Africa. Suico's loss was the third for RWS in just a span of two weeks.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

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Market turnover hits ₱1T

Infra work seen to peak in 3 yrs

THE CONSTRUCTION sector in three to five years will experience a boom, helped on by low inflation levels and an expanding real estate sector, according to property consultant CB Richard Ellis Philippines Inc.

Inflation, or the rise in prices of goods and services, greatly affects the material and labor costs. Inflation has fallen to single digit-levels, with the lowest rate recorded at 2.2 percent in March 2007.

A real estate boom usually precedes a construction boom, ensuring that demand will sustain the latter.

The real estate boom was perceived to have started in 2005, largely due to a growing outsourcing industry that has spurred demand for office spaces, very low interest rates on housing loans, and an increasing appetite for homes among overseas Filipino workers.

The continuous rise in office space take-up, 70 percent of which come from business process outsourcing (BPO) firms, have spurred office developers to start building again since 2006, albeit at a more cautious manner, such as by pre-leasing the space before projects are completed, said Victor Asuncion, CBRE director for Global Research and Consultancy Services.

"The macroeconomic fundamentals are strong, and so is BPO demand," added Rick Santos, CBRE chair.

The property consultant said office building supply this year will reach 232,180 square meters, and will grow to 330,425 square meters in 2008 based on commitments by certain firms.

In 2009, commitments to build office space have reached a total of 105,909 square meters.

On the other hand, demand for office space is seen at 220,000 square meters in 2007, almost

INFRA/ B6

PSE marks 80-year milestone with record value

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S ANNUAL VALUE turnover in the first nine months hit a record P1 trillion—a landmark in the PSE's 80-year history.

PSE records showed that value turnover reached P1.007 trillion from January to September this year, or 177 percent higher than the P363.7-billion posted during the same period last year. This is also 76 percent more than the P572.63-billion total for the whole of 2006.

"We consider this a major milestone because, in the 80-year history of our stock market, annual turnover had never before breached the P1-trillion level," PSE president Francis Lim said in a statement.

Annual value turnover reached P145.4 billion in 2003; jumped to P206.6 billion in 2004; and further surged to P383.52 billion in 2005.

Daily average turnover jumped to P5.41 billion from January to September this year, or 178.4 percent more than the P1.94-billion level for the same nine-month period last year, and 133.6 percent bigger than the P2.32 billion for the whole of 2006.

"The unprecedented surge in value turnover so far this year reflects the growing enthusiasm of investors, including foreign groups, to jump into our stock market," Lim said. "This is a clear vote of confidence in our market."

Based on PSE data, the industrial sector grabbed the biggest share of value turnover with P224.03 billion for the first nine months of the year.

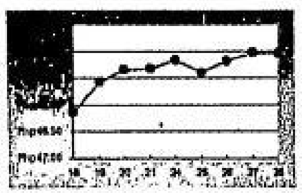
The property sector came in second with P219.13 billion; services sector, P191.57 billion; holding firms sector, P160.34 billion; financial sector, P143.74 billion; and the mining and oil sector, P68.29 billion.

Firms in the SME (small- and medium-sized enterprise) board accounted for P148.22 million of value turnover for the first nine months of the year.

MARKET/ B6

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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STOCK MARKET

Investors await MB key rate decision

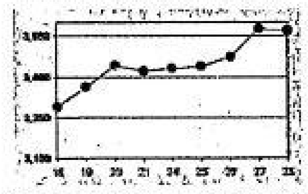
STOCK MARKET INVESTORS ARE anxiously waiting for the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' monetary board meeting on Oct. 4, when authorities will decide whether or not they will cut key interest rates, according to AB Capital Securities.

"The sentiment is that the BSP will cut their rates," AB Capital said in a weekly note. "The larger than expected rate cut of the US Federal Reserve (of 50 basis points) gives [the BSP] the opportunity to do so. Furthermore, inflation levels in September are not expected to be high."

The brokerage firm said a rate cut may spark a rally in the local bourse, with property shares standing to benefit the most.

INVESTORS/ B5

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

IN THIS ISSUE
- BSP plan to rein in losses sought /B3
- BIR suspends VAT rule on refined sugar sales /B6
- For Microtel Inns, maiden offer may be in the works /B7

BSP airs caution over surge in money supply

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas has expressed caution over a potential surge in money supply in the fourth quarter and escalating oil prices—the two major risk factors to its inflation outlook—ahead of its next interest rate setting on Oct. 4.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters on Friday that, while the inflation environment remained benign, the central bank "would have to be careful in assessing the balance of risks" in their outlook.

"These risks would include the growth in domestic liquidity, which we need to contain, and as the BOP (balance of payments) continues to be in surplus, we need to make sure that the liquidity in the system is consistent with low and stable interest rate," Tetangco said.

Also, food prices around the world are rising as unpredictable weather is seen to affect production, the BSP chief said.

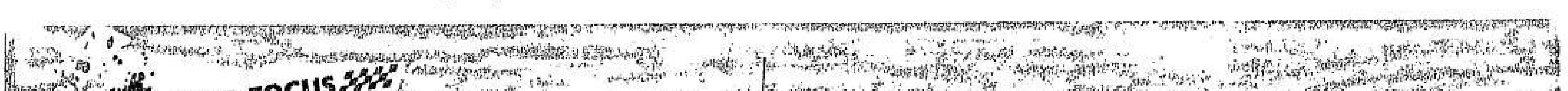
In a separate interview Friday night, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo aired his concern over rising oil prices and the expansion of broad money supply.

"Oil prices continue to be very high and that could have ramifications on the consumer basket, especially transport," Guinigundo said. "Primary commodities like food, vegetables and meat products ... have to be transported."

If the market expects prices of oil products to go up, that may lead to "adverse inflation expectations, and that's something that we need to be watchful of," he added.

The BSP has put in place mea-

BSP AIRS/ B5



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Napocor shuns debt market this year

Privatization proceeds boost company finances

By Abigail L. Ho

BUOYED BY PROCEEDS from its privatization and by a reduction in its operating expenses, the state-run National Power Corp. is not expected to take out any more loans for the rest of the year.

Napocor president Cyril Del Callar said the state firm has succeeded in refraining from borrowing any funds with already 10 months of the year having gone by, mainly due to the successful privatization of its assets by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

"To date, the internally generated revenues of Napocor can take care of its operations," he said in a briefing Friday.

He explained that the sale of some of Napocor's assets to the private sector had helped reduce its operating expenses. The proceeds from these privatized power plants, on the other hand, had helped trim the company's debts.

Some buyers, like SN Aboitiz Power Inc., had even advanced their payments for the plants, opting to pay immediately instead of going through the usual seven-year amortization period, he said.

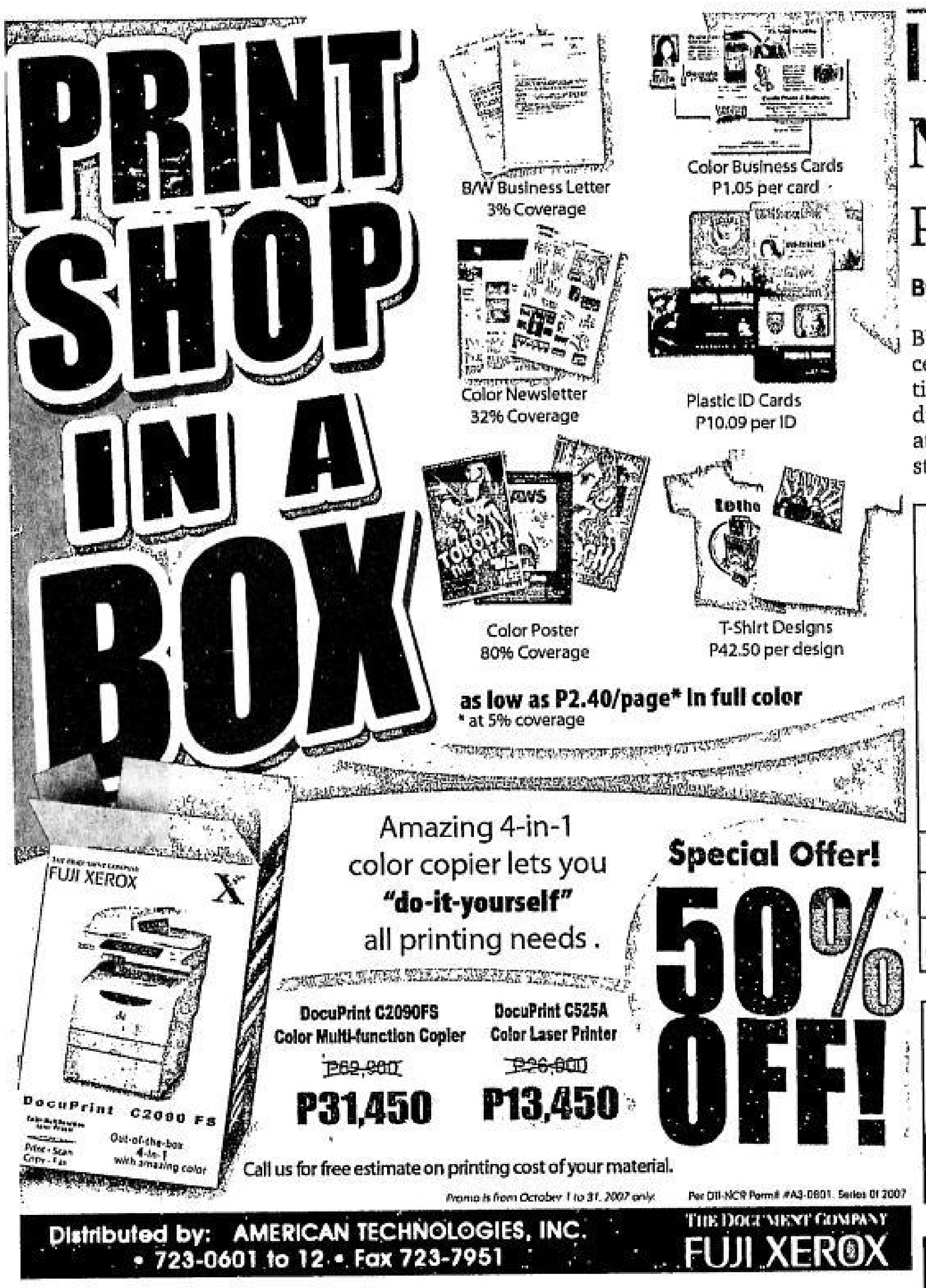
"I hope buyers of the other plants will also advance their payments while the peso is strong [against] the dollar," he said.

"Based on the terms of reference [for the plants], the 60-percent [balance] will be paid with a double-digit interest rate," he further explained. "Right now, you can borrow at a single-digit interest rate, so it's cheaper to pay a lump sum now and just find cheaper financing elsewhere to pay for the full bid offer."

The decision whether or not to borrow, however, would still be for PSALM to make, he said.

"As submitted to Congress, if the worst case happens, our estimated level of borrowing will be $500 million to $700 million. But that's just an estimate. For 2007, we said we'd need to borrow $400 million to $500 million. As of this time, we have yet to borrow. And I leave it now up to PSALM if they want to borrow," he added.

In an earlier interview, PSALM president and chief executive Jose Ibazeta said all privatization proceeds would be used to repay Napocor's debts.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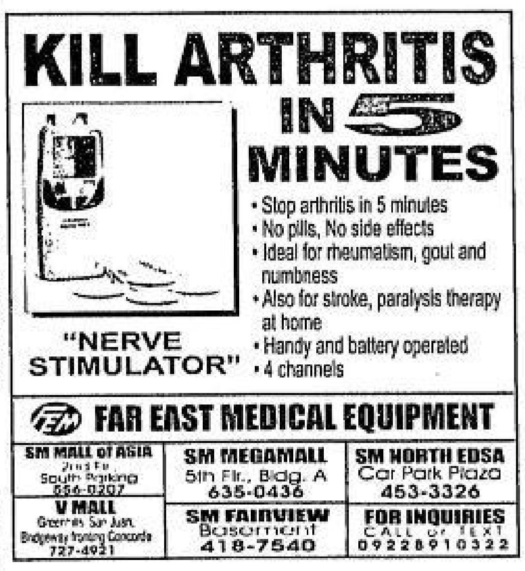
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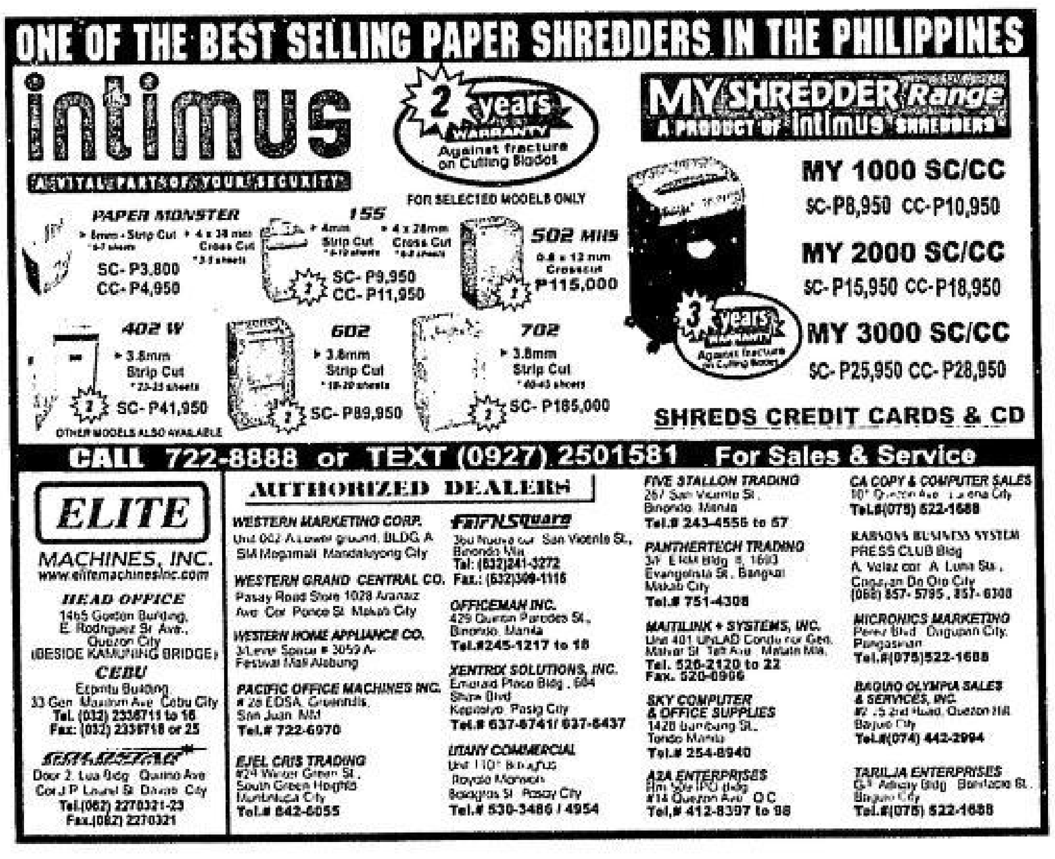
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BSP plan to rein in losses sought

Central bank's coffers bled by effort to contain inflation

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP), whose expenses have risen in recent months amid efforts to mop up excess liquidity in the financial system, will be asked to state its action plan on how to address its sudden slippage into a huge budget deficit.

A ranking official from the Department of Finance, tasked to monitor financial performance of state-owned firms, said the BSP's deficit was a drag to the fiscal standing of the entire public sector.

In the first half, the BSP posted a deficit of P31.47 billion, a stark reversal from the P11.259 billion in surplus registered in the same period last year.

The BSP's deficit was only P9.5 billion lower than the P40.98-billion deficit of the national government during the period.

Fortunately, many government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) registered surpluses in the first six months and turned around from the deficits they posted in the previous years, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

If not for that, he added, the public sector's fiscal position would have worsened because of the BSP's slippage.

The DOF earlier reported that the entire public sector registered a combined surplus of P24 billion in the first half, marking a 79-percent increase from that a year ago.

This was boosted largely by the P32.68 billion in combined surpluses of GOCCs, the P30.72 billion of social security institutions, the P31 billion of local government units and the P5 billion of government financial institutions.

The surpluses, however, were partly dragged down by the deficits of the BSP and the national government.

"[The DOF will ask what the BSP intends to do about the deficit," said the DOF official. The source said the goal of improving the country's fiscal condition does not only cover the national government but the entire public sector.

The BSP implemented several measures in the first half to curb growth in domestic liquidity, which monetary officials said was likely to cause an accelerated inflation if not properly addressed.

The growing liquidity was attributed to the increase in remittances from overseas Filipino workers and the rise in foreign portfolio and direct investments.

Although increasing investments and remittances have the desired effect of raising income, they can also cause faster growth in consumer prices.

To mop up excess cash in the system, the BSP encouraged GOCCs to deposit more of their funds to the central bank by offering attractive interest rates. Yields on special depository accounts of GOCCs are higher than regular interest rates.

The BSP also allowed trust departments of banks to directly deposit funds with the central bank.

The interest paid by the BSP on deposits by GOCCs and trust departments of banks meant higher central bank expenses.

Inflation for the first eight months of the year stood at 2.6 percent, lower than the government's goal of limiting the figure between 4 and 5 percent.

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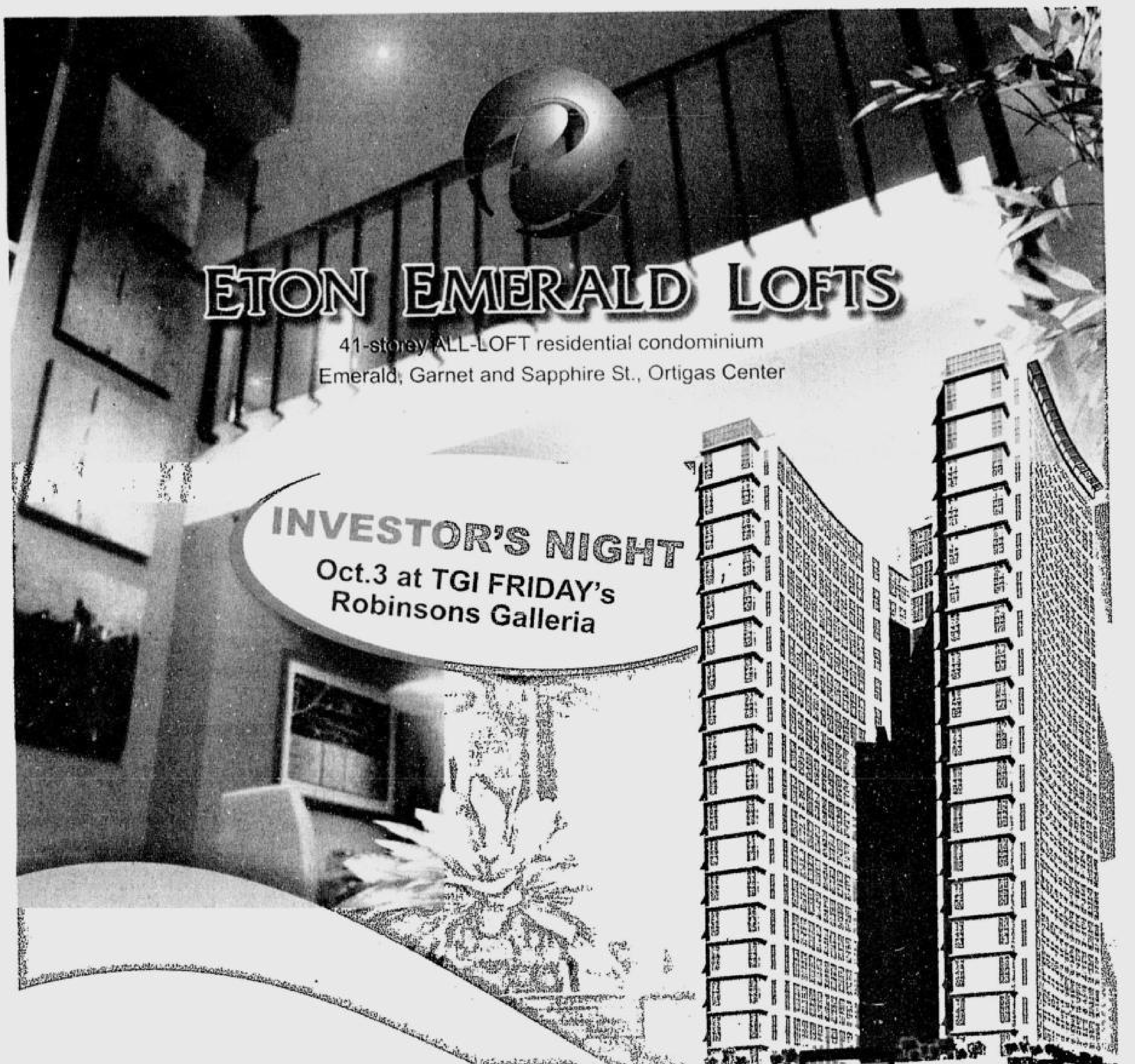
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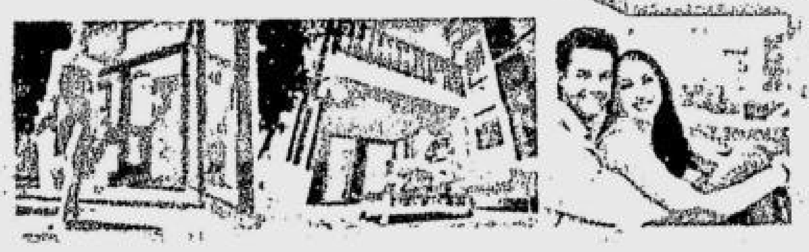

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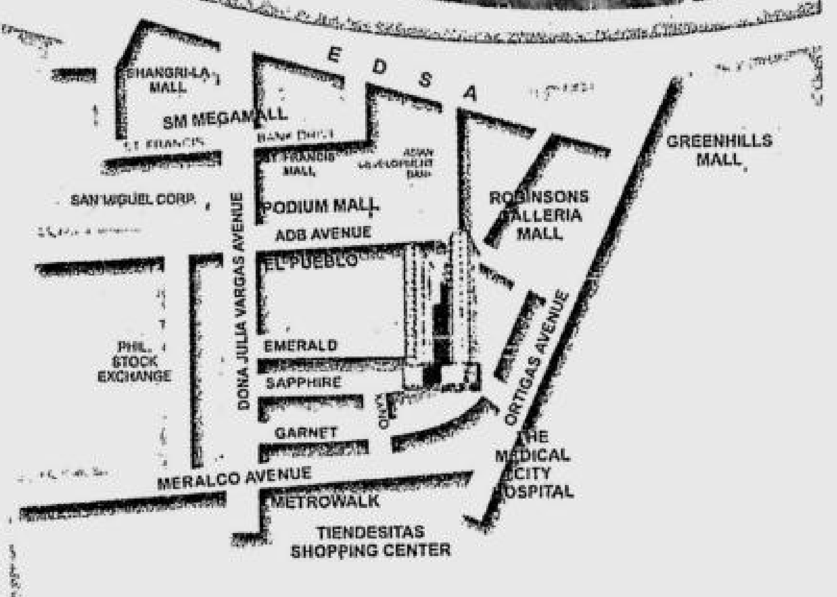

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Cielito F. Habito

LAST WEEK'S SENATE HEARINGS on the NBN-ZTE scandal must have given Neda and its staff reason to both feel good and feel bad. The Neda is of course the National Economic and Development Authority, that agency of the government tasked to coordinate overall socio-economic development planning.

No authority?

A big part of the Neda's "clout" lies its role in the evaluation and approval of projects funded by official development assistance (ODA), in the form of foreign grants and concessional loans, such as the now-infamous ZTE broadband deal for a National Broadband Network (NBN).

At some points in the hearings, Neda seemed reduced to a mere staff agency with very little, if any, authority—notwithstanding that the "A" in its name precisely stands for that. At other points, the crucial and pre-eminent role played by the agency within the national government in shaping the nation's future was affirmed by the legislators grilling Neda's former leader, now CHEd Chair Romulo Neri. Ironically, it was the latter who sometimes came across as implying that Neda is virtually powerless, incurring at one point the ire of a senator who pointed out that Neda was vested with great powers and independence by the Constitution itself.

A nosy agency

The Neda is actually two things. It is the Neda Board, chaired by the President and composed of most members of the Cabinet plus the Bangko Sentral governor, which meets once a month in lieu of the regular Cabinet meeting. It is also the Neda Secretariat—the agency housed in Pasig City formerly headed by Neri, along with its regional offices all around the country, which provides technical secretariat support to the Neda Board. The Neda's legal charter describes it as the highest policy-making body in the country. Thus, it cannot be as weak as it seemed to have been implied in some parts of last week's hearings.

It is the Neda Secretariat's job to ensure that all decisions of the Neda Board are implemented. To do this effectively, it must have the authority for oversight—that is precisely the reason for the agency's name—and as I often describe it, Neda must necessarily "poke its nose into everybody else's business." That is why the Neda and its director general can be so unpopular, and would rather be bypassed by Cabinet colleagues, local executives and legislators if they can.

Projects vs contracts

This is particularly so in the context of Neda's role in the evaluation and approval of ODA projects by the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC), prior to elevation to the full Neda Board. ICC, while chaired by the secretary of finance, relies on the full complement of the Neda staff, including its regional offices, for its technical secretariat support. ODA-funded projects must thus undergo Neda scrutiny.

On this, Neri repeatedly asserts that it is the projects' substance (he used the word "concept," which is

NO FREE LUNCH/ B6

Bangko Sentral OKs Smart loan

Funding for 3G project

By Doris C. Dumlao

SMART COMMUNICATIONS Inc., the country's leading mobile phone provider, has obtained the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' approval for its plan to seek a fresh $50 million foreign loan for the expansion of its 3G services.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the loan would be obtained from Nordeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale of Singapore.

Local borrowers are required to seek the Monetary Board approval for obligations that will entail foreign currency payments that will be obtained from the domestic banking system.

Guinigundo said proceeds from the loan would be used by Smart to bankroll the expansion of its state-of-the-art 3G services.

3G is the third generation mobile phone standards and technology. It enables network operators to offer users a wider range of more advanced services while achieving greater network capacity.

Smart, the cash cow of telecommunication giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., offers national 3G coverage with more than 800 sites spanning 119 cities and municipalities.

In the meantime, the BSP has reported a 5.8-percent rise in outstanding loans granted by foreign currency deposit units of banks to $3.3 billion as of end-June from a quarter ago. Year-on-year, however, the FCDU loan portfolio dropped by $606 million or 15.7 percent.

New loans granted in the second quarter exceeded the previous quarter's level by more than $313 million, while loan payments declined by $233 million.

More than 55 percent of the FCDU loan portfolio has short-term maturities—with payment terms of less than one year.

In terms of borrowers' profile, commodity/service exporters accounted for 26 percent of the total loan portfolio, followed by public utility firms with a 15-percent share. The share to total FCDU loans of private sector borrowings rose to 94 percent in June from 88 percent in March 2007.

Prepayments made by public sector entities including the BSP cut down by half the public sector's share in the FCDU loan portfolio to only 6 percent as of end-June 2007.

SM renames 60-ha district

SM INVESTMENTS CORP. HAS renamed its 60-hectare reclaimed property in Pasay City fronting the Manila Bay as Mall of Asia Complex.

The complex was intended for development into an alternative business district, complete with offices, an exhibition and convention center, a row of hotels facing the Manila Bay, a sports arena and a commercial ferry terminal. It is now home to SM Mall of Asia and the corporate offices of SM Investments and its subsidiaries.

Ongoing projects include the SMX Convention Center, the country's largest exhibition and convention center, OneE-com Center, a 70,000-sq. m. office building suited for business process outsourcing companies. Both will be open for business within the fourth quarter of the year. Within the next 12-24 months, two hotels will be rising in the area.

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SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	Pls. Call/1,250,000*	1,050,000
Alta Vista A/B*/Corp.**	-	260,000/Pls. Call*
Baguio Country Club	580,000	550,000
Camp John Hay	330,000	280,000
Canlubang Golf	500,000	440,000
Canyon Woods	90,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	2,100,000
Club Filipino	120,000	80,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	Pls. Call*	200,000*
Eastridge A/B*	100,000	Pls. Call
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	90,000/180,000*/200,000**	50,000
Luisita Golf B	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Golf Corporate	24,000,000	20,000,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	18,000,000
Manila Polo	5,500,000	4,500,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	300,000/Pls. Call*	250,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	Pls. Call	180,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	200,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160,000	-
Mimosa C1/C2*/C3**	220,000/180,000**	150,000/250,000*
Mt. Malarayat A	180,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/250,000*/350,000**	-
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Quezon City Sports Club	170,000	120,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	160,000*/250,000**	130,000*/150,000**
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	240,000
Royale Tagaytay CC	65,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/130,000*	100,000*
Splendido Taal	200,000	Pls. Call
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	2,100,000	1,600,000
The Palms Country Club	390,000	Pls. Call
Tagaytay Country Club	320,000	290,000
Tagaytay Highlands	680,000	630,000
Tagaytay Midlands	670,000	630,000
The Country Club	2,200,000	-
Tower Club A/B*	180,000	-
Valley Golf	250,000	Pls. Call
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	80,000
Wack Wack Golf	10,000,000	9,500,000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,100,000	1,050,000
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,250,000	1,100,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	550,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	330,000	280,000
CANLUBANG	500,000	450,000
CAPITOL HILLS	40,000	-
CEBU COUNTRY CLUB	-	2,000,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	120,000	90,000
CLUB FILIPINO	140,000	90,000
EAGLERIDGE "A"	160,000	-
EAGLERIDGE "B"	250,000	230,000
EAGLERIDGE "C"	330,000	-
FOREST HILLS "A"	90,000	60,000
LUISITA GOLF "A"	350,000	240,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	Please Call	200,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	300,000	220,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP)	23,000,000	20,000,000
MANILA GOLF (IND)	-	18,000,000
MANILA POLO	Please Call	4,500,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	300,000	280,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	700,000	-
MANILA YACHT CLUB	200,000	-
MIMOSA (IND)	220,000	-
MT. MALARAYAT GOLD "A"	160,000	100,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"	170,000	150,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	300,000	280,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	330,000	300,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	170,000	130,000
ROCKWELL CLUB	350,000	270,000
SPA & LODGE	500,000	450,000
STA. ELENA "A"	-	1,700,000
STA. ELENA "B"	-	2,050,000
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB	300,000	290,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	700,000	630,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	650,000	630,000
THE PALMS COUNTRY CLUB "A"	340,000	300,000
VALLE VERDE (IND)	100,000	90,000
VALLEY GOLF	Please Call	210,000
WACK-WACK GOLF CLUB	10,000,000	Please Call

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CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
ALABANG A	1,100,000	PLS. CALL
ALABANG B	1,250,000	PLS. CALL
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	PLS. CALL	550,000
CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	460,000	PLS. CALL
CELEBRITY CLUB	PLS. CALL	90,000
CLUB FILIPINO		90,000
CLUB PUNTA FUEGO	350,000	PLS. CALL
EAGLERIDGE C	350,000	300,000
FONTANA B	70,000	PLS. CALL
FOREST HILLS B	180,000	PLS. CALL
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB B	PLS. CALL	220,000
MANILA GOLF CORP	23,000,000	22,000,000
MANILA GOLF IND	PLS. CALL	20,000,000
MANILA POLO CLUB	5,300,000	5,000,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A	300,000	250,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	650,000	
MANILA YACHT CLUB(IND.)	350,000	PLS. CALL
METROCLUB A	150,000	PLS. CALL
MIMOSA C-2	PLS. CALL	380,000
ORCHARD A	170,000	PLS. CALL
ORCHARD B	300,000	
ORCHARD C	350,000	PLS. CALL
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	150,000	PLS. CALL
RIVIERA GOLF B	90,000	
RIVIERA GOLF C	180,000	150,000
ROCKWELL CLUB	PLS. CALL	230,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	60,000	
SPA & LODGE	550,000	450,000
SPLENDIDO	250,000	150,000
STA ELENA A	1,800,000	PLS. CALL
SUBIC BAY GOLF CLUB	100,000	PLS. CALL
SUMMIT POINT	350,000	PLS. CALL
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB		280,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	PLS. CALL	630,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	PLS. CALL	650,000
THE PALMS IND	350,000	PLS. CALL
TOWER CLUB IND.	200,000	150,000
VALLEY GOLF	250,000	220,000
VALLE VERDE	PLS. CALL	100,000
WACK WACK	PLS. CALL	9,500,000

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CURRENCIES

September 28, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.706664	1.000000	45.0630
Japan	Yen	0.006113	0.008650	0.3898
United Kingdom	Pound	1.432408	2.027000	91.3427
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.091072	0.128876	5.8075
Switzerland	Franc	0.602236	0.852224	38.4038
Canada	Dollar	0.705535	0.998403	44.9910
Singapore	Dollar	0.474239	0.671096	30.2416
Australia	Dollar	0.620970	0.878735	39.5984
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.875385	2.653857	119.5908
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.188993	0.267444	12.0518
Brunei	Dollar	0.472654	0.668852	30.1405
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000077	0.000109	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.022363	0.031646	1.4261
UE	Dirham	0.192468	0.272361	12.2734
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.415100	63.7687
Korea	Won	0.000768	0.001087	0.0490
China	Yuan**	0.094036	0.133071	5.9966
Denmark	Kroner	0.134140	0.189822	8.5539
India	Rupee	0.017827	0.025227	1.1368
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.206930	0.292826	13.1956
New Zealand	Dollar	0.528861	0.748391	33.7247
Sweden	Kroner	0.108505	0.153546	6.9192
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021466	0.030377	1.3689

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Sept. 27, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen
** Asian time closing rate as of Sept. 27, 2007

(As of September 28, 2007)

52-WEEK	52-WEEK	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	30,000
73	39	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	59	59.5	57	59	1,396,500
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	67.5	67.5	66	66.5	3,027,900
935	630	China Banking Corp.	880	885	880	880	7,600
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.42	6,100,000
75.5	40	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	56	58	55.5	56	6,775,700
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	47	48.5	47	48.5	197,400
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	62	62	62	62	200
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	55	55	55	55	500
39.57	15	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23	23.25	23	23.25	4,050,900
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	72	76	72	76	93,300
66	43.52	Union Bank of the Philippines	55	55.5	54.5	55	437,200
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.85	3.95	3.85	3.95	41,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.92	1.94	1.92	1.92	1,108,000
16.25	3.7	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.75	11.5	10.75	11.25	2,651,700
8.8	4.6	Filipino Fund Inc.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	1,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	210,000
1,805.00	1,560.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,780.00	1,780.00	1,780.00	1,780.00	840
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	883,000
1,005.00	232	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	755	770	755	770	1,220
2,335.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc	2,290.00	2,290.00	2,290.00	2,290.00	120
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp	1.58	1.6	1.54	1.54	1,220,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.4	3,590,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	450,000
70	49	First Gen Corp.	62	63.5	62	63.5	685,100
92	50	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	80	80	77.5	77.5	683,300
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	14.25	14.25	13.75	14	3,832,100
105.45	17.27	Manila Electric Co.	83	83.5	82	83	1,966,200
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.4	6,450,000
6.5	3.9	Petron Corp.	5.8	5.9	5.7	5.7	4,044,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.2	7.2	343,000
1.9	0.99	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp	1.26	1.26	1.22	1.24	760,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.2	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	108,000
2.95	1.66	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.76	1.78	947,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	350,000
61	34	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52.5	53	52.5	53	652,700
25	20	Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	24	24	24	24	100
0.98	0.43	RFM Corp.	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.82	240,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.44	2.5	2.44	2.5	5,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	60.5	62	60.5	62	64,700
88	59.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	63	63	62	62.5	158,400
0.66	0.25	Swift Foods Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	180,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16.25	1,610,200
0.55	0.26	Vitarich Corp.	0.36	0.39	0.36	0.39	80,000
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.83	EEI Corp.	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.4	758,000
9.2	4.9	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.2	8.2	4,697,000
7	1.44	Republic Cement Corp.	4.1	4.1	3.95	4	97,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.26	1.26	1.18	1.24	9,319,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.15	752,000
2.5	1.32	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	10,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.125	Picop Resources Inc	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.41	11,820,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	2.06	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	25,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.1	0.105	17,830,000
1.28	0.22	APC Group Inc.	0.84	0.85	0.82	0.84	15,910,000
3.6	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	3.1	3.15	3.05	3.05	976,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	16,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	25,400,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,000,000
9.7	5.1	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.9	7	6.9	7	8,323,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.015	50,800,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5	5.2	5	5.2	126,535,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.3	2.32	901,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	35,000
590	375	Ayala Corp.	540	565	540	550	611,650
5.8	1.22	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.05	4.15	5,425,000
10.25	3.75	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.2	9.2	8.9	9.1	556,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	4	4	4	4	33,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	193,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.4	5.6	5.3	5.4	1,311,000
3.55	1.26	House of Investments Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	39,000
14.5	6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.75	10.25	10.75	350,800
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.84	1.9	150,000
0.8	0.205	Medco Holdings Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.59	0.59	110,000
0.95	0.195	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.55	200,000
11.5	1.1	Multitech Investments Corp.	6.2	6.6	6.1	6.2	13,064,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	86,000
0.215	0.01	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.2	0.2	0.185	0.19	190,120,000
1.54	0.72	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.8	0.85	340,000
0.75	0.18	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.45	3,470,000
452.5	237.84	SM Investments Corp.	375	377.5	370	372.5	129,010
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.42	0.43	0.41	0.42	12,520,000
1.06	0.6	Solid Group Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.72	360,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18.25	18.25	18	18	66,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.4	0.41	0.39	0.4	10,320,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.96	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.52	147,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc	8	8	7.7	7.8	62,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	80,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc.	16.75	16.75	16	16.25	10,196,500
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.18	1.2	2,175,000
4.7	2.65	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.8	4.1	3.8	4.1	543,000
2.9	1.3	Cityland Development Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	20,000
0.86	0.31	Crown Equities Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.63	1,230,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.52	0.53	0.5	0.5	6,230,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.71	3,440,000
0.47	0.05	Ever Gotesco Resources & Hold'gs Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	4,150,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.24	1.26	1.2	1.22	19,187,000
2.44	1.26	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.7	1.78	1.7	1.74	147,084,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	400,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.56	0.58	9,320,000
4.4	1.73	Megaworld Corp.	3.5	3.65	3.45	3.45	96,240,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.4	4.4	3.9	3.9	88,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	800,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp.	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	3,040,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16.5	9,170,600
5.9	1.52	SM Development Corp.	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	2,003,000
13.5	6.64	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.5	12	6,917,600
3.25	1.02	Shang Properties Inc.	2.42	2.42	2.36	2.36	224,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	300,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.26	0.27	11,020,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	5.1	5.1	4.95	5.1	12,815,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16.25	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	32	57,100
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc	9.2	9.5	9.2	9.5	849,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.3	1.36	1.3	1.36	2,898,000
1,520.00	1,055.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,515.00	1,515.00	1,465.00	1,470.00	106,350
2,950.00	2,150.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,950.00	2,950.00	2,910.00	2,910.00	106,970
7.9	4.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp	7	7.1	6.9	7.1	2,647,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.19	0.195	11,320,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.5	9.8	9.3	9.6	18,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.4	8.5	8.2	8.2	2,076,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.055	0.046	0.048	1,204,400,000
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.8	1.8	410,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information & Technology Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.185	0.19	15,030,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	130,000
0.0725	0.029	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	271,800,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l Inc	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.55	1,434,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	47,000
6.8	3.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.75	3.9	3.75	3.9	265,000
38.5	16.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	37.5	37.5	36	36.5	1,031,200
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc	2	2	2	2	91,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
16.5	5	Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp.	8.8	9	8.8	9	74,000
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.7	3	2.65	2.95	2,953,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	10,000
0.98	0.3	Premiere Entertainment Prod Inc.	0.61	0.69	0.61	0.68	14,800,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.8	0.85	0.8	0.84	3,200,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc	3	3	3	3	76,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.94	Macroasia Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.6	199,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12.75	13.25	12.75	13.25	60,000
30	10.75	Paxys Inc	13	13	12.25	12.75	1,922,000
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	221,900,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.7	347,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	62,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	15.75	16	15.5	16	2,732,100
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	12	12	12	12	9,000
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3	3.1	3	3.1	35,000
3.1	0.51	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.2	2.36	2.2	2.36	124,924,000
0.37	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	58,020,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	23,970,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.028	176,500,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	1,400,000
30	1.2	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	19.25	20.25	18.75	20	4,291,800
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	193,500,000
7.8	3.45	Philex Mining Corp.	7.7	7.8	7.5	7.7	8,105,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	34	34.5	34	34.5	28,600
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.06	1.06	1	1.02	731,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.26	3,595,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.35	12,000,000
0.026	0.0095	Oriental Pet. & Minerals Corp. "A"	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	191,600,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. & Minerals Corp. "B"	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.026	5,100,000
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.8	10	9.8	9.9	117,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.026	683,700,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	908.52 UP	1.18	32,514,380	943,566,782.00
Industrial	4,572.74 UP	12.97	54,661,800	546,874,580.00
Holding Firms	2,033.04 UP	34.95	593,613,460	1,782,680,675.00
Property	1,612.71 UP	6.51	346,882,700	1,115,428,030.00
Service	1,740.49 DOWN	21.89	1,538,010,620	689,734,015.00
Mining & Oil	7,372.10 UP	45.77	1,712,667,500	552,923,115.00
All Shares Index	2,226.71 UP	3.91		
PSEI	3,572.90 DOWN	4.61		
		GRAND TOTALS	4,278,350,460	5,631,207,197.00

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Ayala group to prepay ₱7B in debts in October

Move expected to generate savings of P1.2B

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

AYALA CORP., THE COUNTRY'S oldest conglomerate, is preparing to pay another P7 billion in borrowings this month, ahead of their due dates.

This will be on top of the P8 billion that has been prepaid by the company so far this year, Ayala treasurer Ramon Opulencia said.

The settlement of these obligations head of maturity will generate for the company some P1.2 billion in interest savings.

Last Friday, Ayala Corp. said it was planning to issue P5 billion worth of peso bonds this year to build up its cash by 2008.

"Our ability to achieve this could be attributed to our strategy to be forward-looking in our fund-raising activities. This involves raising capital or funding when markets are conducive. It also involves our ability to monetize equity holdings to improve our balance sheet position and and to enable us to support our investment activities," Opulencia said.

Ayala has invested $125-$200 million since last year in the offshore real-estate and business process outsourcing (BPO) industries.

For one, ARCH Capital Asian Partners, L.P. , a real estate private equity fund managed by a joint venture firm involving the Ayala Group, focuses on investment opportunities in a number of Asian countries, such as Greater China, India , Thailand and Vietnam .

Last year, LiveIt Solutions, Ayala's holding company for its BPO ventures, invested a total of $62 million since it began operations in July 2006. It earlier acquired a majority stake in Integreon Managed Solutions, a US-based document and knowledge process outsourcing company with delivery centers in the US , UK and India.

Proceeds from Ayala's value realization initiatives and healthy dividend flows from subsidiaries have brought the company's cash level to P20 billion by the end of the first half, giving the company flexibility to further reduce debt and finance expenses.

Its net debt as of the end of the first semester was P13 billion, with its net debt-to-equity ratio at 0.15 to 1, from 0.29 to 1 at the start of the year.

The company has also shifted to peso debts from US dollar-denominated obligations. Its debt mix is now 81 percent peso- and 19 percent dollar-denominated.

The previous year's debt mix was 59 percent peso- and 31 percent dollar-denominated.

"The group's financial position is at its strongest in the past decade and we are pursuing our efforts to expand the group's growth platform in new sectors. We continue to nurture our initial investments in the BPO space and to explore other industries that are beginning to open up and present opportunities for broader private sector participation," Ayala chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala earlier said.

BSP airs caution over surge in money supply

From page B1

sures that slowed down the growth in domestic liquidity below 20 percent in the last few months. But with the large BOP surplus, more money could be infused into the system throughout the rest of the year, Guinigundo said.

"We could see ample liquidity in the system, and if the BOP ... continues to be strong, that could pose some pressure on inflation," Guinigundo said.

He added that, although liquidity growth continues to slow down, he does not know if this trend will continue in the last quarter of the year.

"Capital flows can strengthen," Guinigundo said. "Remember that the US had reduced rates by 50 basis points. That could drive out investments to emerging markets, including the Philippines, so that will contribute to liquidity growth."

The country yielded a record-high balance of payments surplus of $6.75 billion from January to August this year on robust inflows from overseas Filipinos and foreign investors.

For the month of August alone, the surplus amounted to $2.2 billion, dwarfing the $359 million posted in the same period last year. This came about despite the global financial volatility spurred by the US housing slump that, in turn, triggered net foreign capital outflows from the local stock market during the period.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world.

Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident, like importation or debt servicing, is a deficit item in the BOP. Any deal that gives rise to a receipt, like borrowing, exporting or remitting money from abroad, is a surplus item.

On Friday, the BSP also reported that the growth in the country's domestic liquidity eased to 14.9 percent in August year-on-year.

In August, however, there was a net outflow of foreign "hot money" or portfolio investments in local stocks, bonds and money market due to the US credit crunch.

Domestic liquidity, or m3, is the broadest measure of money, and is used to estimate the entire supply of money within an economy, including money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements.

It is one of the indicators closely monitored by the central bank in its monetary setting.

Investors await MB key rate decision

From page B1

"The market is expected to once again try the 3,600 resistance level, but will be hard pressed to do so without a strong positive catalyst," AB Capital added.

The last time monetary authorities changed key interest rates was on July 12, when it slashed its overnight borrowing rate to 6 percent from 7.5 percent, and its overnight lending rate to 8 percent from 9.75 percent.

BSP officials also said the overall inflation environment "continues to be favorable," and foresees inflation in September to fall within the 2.1 percent and 2.8 percent range.

The National Statistics Office will release the September inflation data on Oct. 5, a day after the BSP's policy meeting.

Inflation for the first eight months of the year averaged 2.6 percent, well below the government's target range of 4-5 percent for the whole year.

But other analysts said local shares may surrender to profit-taking after the stock market's 149-point surge last week. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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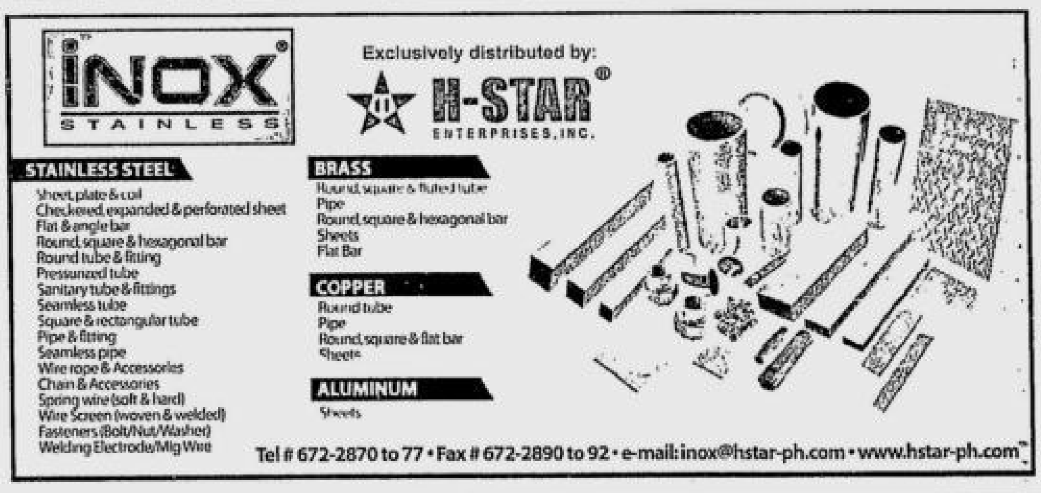

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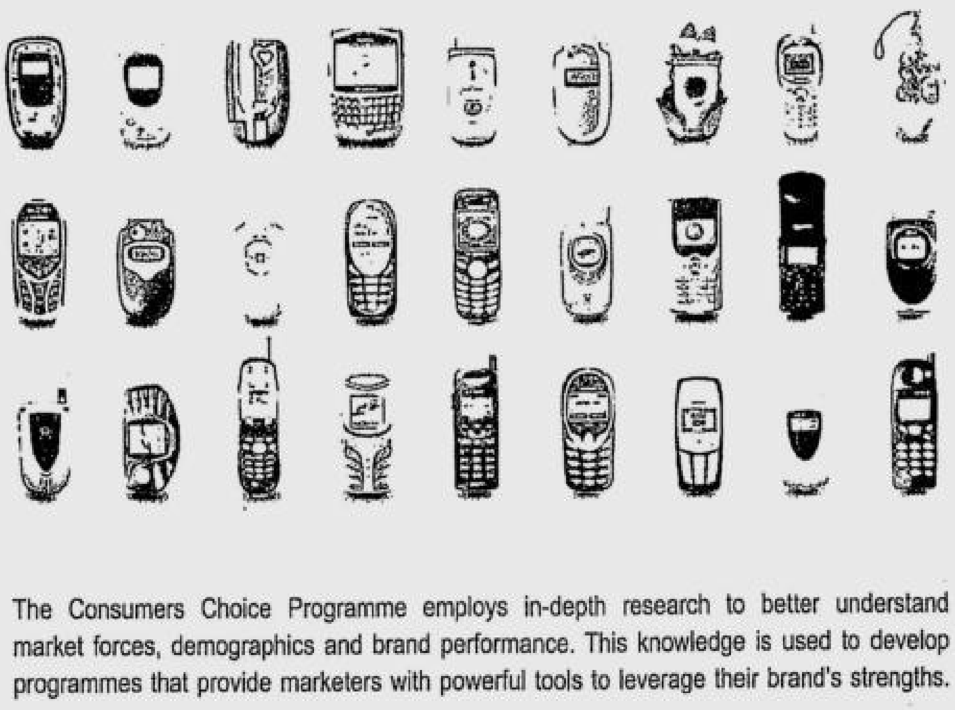

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BIR suspends VAT rule on refined sugar sales

Sector given time to prepare for tax collection enhancement plans

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE has suspended the implementation of a regulation requiring the advance payment of value-added tax on the sale of refined sugar.

The suspension was made following complaints lodged by members of the sugar industry.

Sugar industry players claimed the regulation was too prohibitive and that it was issued by the BIR without consultation with affected parties.

Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti said her office had to issue Revenue Regulation No. 11-2007, which suspended the implementation of the advanced collection of VAT as embodied in RR No. 6-2007, to give industry players more time to prepare for any government plan to reform the system of VAT collection.

Hefti said BIR officials actually consulted the industry, but added more dialogues might be needed to properly communicate the need for the government to plug VAT leakages in the sugar industry.

The suspended regulation was supposed to be the BIR's response to the suggestions of the Department of Finance, its mother agency, to closely monitor VAT remittances by members of the sugar industry because of suspected tax leak.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, whose family is involved in the sugar business in Negros Oriental, earlier said the government might be losing huge potential revenues due to tax evasion by some industry players.

One alleged strategy for evading taxes was false VAT exemption claims. Accredited agricultural cooperatives engaged in the sugar business are exempted from VAT.

Under the suspended regulation, VAT on the sale of refined sugar should be paid in advance by the owner before the sugar is withdrawn form the refinery.

No release of sugar is allowed unless it is supported by a Certificate of Advance Payment of VAT issued by the BIR.

The suspended regulation also requires sugar refiners and millers to submit monthly reports on the quantity of refined sugar milled or produced, as well as the amount of advance VAT paid and duly remitted to the national coffers.

Hefti said that because of the suspension, no advance payment of VAT would be required from the sugar industry. She said though that the BIR would strictly monitor the accuracy of the industry's remittance of the 12-percent VAT.

The BIR chief said her office would soon come up with a more acceptable way of collecting VAT from the sugar industry that would, at the same time, plug the suspected tax leaks.

Yap pushing through with trip to China

By Amy R. Remo

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ARTHUR C. YAP said he was pushing through with his official trip to China this week, even after the suspension of two RP-China farm deals last week.

"Our goal this time for the Shanghai trip is to encourage investments in biofuels and our grain staples," Yap told reporters.

Raw materials needed in the production of biofuels include rice, cassava and sweet sorghum, he added.

Yap clarified that the suspension of deals with Jilin Fu Hua Agricultural Science and Technology Development Co. and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Government last week did not mean a "total stop" of the projects that involved these firms.

He said the suspension would just give the DA more time to hold dialogues with concerned farmers and stakeholders.

The suspension of two of the 17 farm deals with Chinese groups will likewise allow the DA to study and focus on the structure and framework of the agreements, and come up with more acceptable deals.

"We hope to finish all the dialogues by Christmas," he said.

"[The Chinese] understand the need for the suspension. In fact, we are just addressing concerns, which they may also face while doing business here," Yap added.

Yap announced the suspension of the two farm deals on Sept. 24 while the Senate was inquiring into the controversial broadband deal with ZTE Corp. of China.

Yap stressed the suspension of the two farm deals was a "unique case" and had nothing to do with the ZTE controversy.

The RP-China farm deals were forged in January this year during the Asean Leaders' Summit, where the two governments signed agreements covering biofuel, agribusiness and fishery sectors.

Yap earlier explained these deals were meant to strengthen the agriculture sector and were not connected to any procurement of Philippine lands.

Jilin Fu Hua is expected to invest $3.8 billion in the next five to seven years in the development of one million hectares of Philippine agricultural land for hybrid corn, rice and sorghum.

This year, it has committed to complete the cultivation of 50,000 hectares of land for hybrid corn and sweet sorghum in several provinces in Cagayan Valley, Isabela, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan.

$15M in food orders booked in Moscow fair

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HAS booked some $15.4 million in orders for Philippine fresh and processed agricultural products during Moscow's largest international autumn food exhibit in September.

Best sellers among Philippine products during the World Food Moscow included dessicated coconut, banana chips, fruits (fresh, dried, frozen and processed) and sardines.

Agriculture Undersecretary for Special Concerns Bernadette Romulo-Puyat told reporters that the total booked and negotiated sales of the DA-led selling mission was almost equal to the country's exports to the Russian Federation in 2006, worth $15.58 million.

Puyat noted that this feat was accomplished by just 10 Filipino exporters over the four-day exhibit, which attracted 1,273 exhibitors from 54 participating countries.

"The Russian market is a big challenge. When I visited supermarkets there, I didn't see any Philippine agricultural product on sale," Puyat said.

She added that with the success of the first batch of Filipino exporters, "we hope to see more of our Philippine farm goods in the shelves of Russian supermarkets."

These trade and selling missions are part of the DA's Export Development Team's thrust to boost Philippine agri-exports by scouting for more overseas markets.

Headed by Puyat, the team was created by Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap to widen the country's agri-export base and to create alternative markets for Philippine agriculture and fisheries products.

Yap earlier said these missions were in line with the DA's goal to raise the income of farmers and fisherfolks and to accelerate farm growth.

Several trade and agricultural missions spearheaded by the DA in the first six months of the year have already yielded a total of P5.7 billion (or $126 million) in sales of fresh and processed food products.

This represents an almost 500-percent increase from the P954 million ($20.86 million) generated in the same period last year.

DA participated in trade and food shows held in the United Arab Emirates, Australia, Belgium, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Korea and Japan. *Amy Remo*

BARANGAY FOOD TERMINALS IN QC
President Macapagal-Arroyo and Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap award certificates to operate Barangay Food Terminals to a barangay chairman in Quezon City. The awarding, held in Project 6 Elementary School, was attended by Rep. Vincent Crisologo and Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte.

Otto prepares for Palawan exploration

By Abigail L. Ho

AUSTRALIA-BASED OTTO ENERGY Ltd. is seeking a partner for Service Contract 55, off the west coast of Palawan, as it prepares to start drilling activities in the area by August 2009.

In a disclosure to the Australian Stock Exchange, Otto Energy CEO Alex Parks said that based on preliminary seismic data, SC 55 was expected to contain about 1.8 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas and 567 million barrels of oil.

If oil alone is found in the area, resource estimates were placed at 320 million to 2.7 billion barrels.

Its potential gas yield was placed at between 721 billion cubic feet (BCF) and 5.6 TCF—even bigger than the Malampaya project.

In case there is both oil and gas, expected yields were placed at 468 BCF to 3.6 TCF of gas and 144 million to 1.1 billion barrels of oil.

Banks oppose CARP rule on foreclosed farmland

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANKS ARE IN UPROAR OVER A GOVERNMENT ruling that subjects all long-foreclosed agricultural property to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Chamber of Thrift Bank president Alfredo Yao, in a report on Friday, said the association would request for a legal opinion from the Department of Justice to clarify the Department of Agrarian Reform's recent ruling that subjected to the CARP even those agricultural property foreclosed by banks beyond a five-year holding period.

Yao said some of the CTB's member-banks had been negatively affected by the ruling.

Once subjected to the land reform program, the banks have no choice but to sell the agricultural property to the government for redistribution to farmers and regular farm workers who are landless, irrespective of tenurial arrangement.

"We could possibly include this as among the amendments to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law which is among the priority measures of the 14th Congress," Yao said.

Last July, House Bill No. 743 entitled, "An Act Strengthening the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program" was filed in Congress. The bill seeks to further amend the funding source by providing that "the initial amount needed to implement CARP until the year 2018, or an additional period of 10 years from the expiration of its period under the amendatory Republic Act No. 8532, shall be funded from the Agrarian Reform Fund."

The bill also mandates banks and financing institutions to accept as collateral for loans any duly registered emancipation patent or certificate of land ownership award, whether individual or collective, issued by the government through the DAR to farmer beneficiaries of agrarian reform. This, however, covers only loans that will be used to enhance crop production and marketing.

Infra work seen to peak in 3 years

From page B1

matching the projected office supply, and will grow 10 to 15 percent a year, CBRE director Paul Ryan Isip said.

The construction boom is also underscored by the estimated 21-percent growth in construction sales in the first semester, as measured by gross value added (GVA).

GVA is a key performance indicator of the construction sector, and is derived by deducting the intermediate goods used in production, such as raw materials, fuel, advertising and other non-industrial overhead costs, from the total value of output or construction sales using 1985 prices as the base year, CBRE noted.

GVA grew almost 21 percent to P29.87 billion in the first half, from P24.76 billion in the same period in 2006, data from the National Statistical Coordination Board showed.

With high-rise residential condominiums, supply is expected to reach nearly 4,500 units in 2008, from over 4,000 in 2007. Asuncion estimates demand right now is half of the 4,500 units projected supply, mostly coming from BPO workers and middle-class families.

"Most developers nowadays are pre-selling their projects before they break ground to eliminate the risk of speculative demand," Asuncion said. "Moreover, [developers were] able to increase project profitability with the inflow of installment payments from buyers."

CBRE also said the voluntary freeze on major construction work is starting to melt, with activities from both the public and private sectors flourishing.

For the public sector, the Arroyo administration has lined up infrastructure projects for completion by 2010. In the private sector, construction projects are ongoing in Metro Baguio, Metro Cebu and Metro Davao. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

Market . . .

From page B1

Total market capitalization of all listed companies reached P8.24 trillion at the end of the first nine months, or 14.8 percent higher than the P7.17-trillion mark at the end of 2006.

Market capitalization of listed domestic companies amounted to P4.25 billion, or 26.7 percent more than the P3.35-billion posted at the end of 2006.

The PSEi, which is the main barometer of local stock price movements, closed at 3,572.9 points during the nine-month period—19.8 percent more than its 2,982.54-point closing level in 2006.

"Our market benefited immensely from the PSE's continuing reforms, which are designed to assure our market's integrity and efficiency," Lim said. "Improvements in government's fiscal position, along with the reassuring maturity that our political leaders have shown in handling their differences, also have helped a lot.

"I am optimistic we can further ratchet up the level of confidence of investors on us and we can entice them to bring more funds to our stock market if we can put in place a more enabling business environment."

Lim added he would actively support the enactment of a capital market-friendly legal and regulatory framework and introduce more global best practices, especially in the areas of good corporate governance and investor protection.

No free lunch

From page B4

too weak a word)—not the specific contracts—that the ICC and Neda Board approve. But he is not completely right to insist that in the case of the NBN project, the DOTC "could do whatever it liked" in deciding how to implement it. Section 9 of the ODA Law (R.A. 8182) states: "All concerned implementing and oversight agencies shall submit to the Neda all information and reports as may be required by it to review draft contracts (emphasis mine)..."

From BOT to loan

It is now widely known, with official transcripts freely circulating, that the ICC and the Neda Board approved the NBN project late last year on the condition (explicitly stated by the President as the Neda Board Chair) that it would be implemented at no cost to the government, i.e., on a build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis with no government guarantees. Neri testified that he had in fact conveyed this to ZTE officials in a lunch meeting arranged by the Chinese Embassy where Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos was also present. And yet, just a few months later, the President was "blessing" the signing of the contract for the project that was to be financed with a loan from the Chinese government—in complete contravention of the Neda Board decision.

The Neda, through Neri, did have the responsibility to, at the very least, call the DOTC's attention that by pursuing the ZTE deal, the latter was violating the Neda Board decision. The DOTC may be free to determine which supplier or contractor to implement a project, but it certainly was not free to just change it from a BOT project to an ODA loan-funded one on its own.

Clear violation?

There is more. The DOTC may have forgotten that Section 4 of the ODA Law states: "ODA shall not be availed of or utilized directly or indirectly for ... telephone programs contracted as of Jan. 1, 1996, except basic telephone programs and projects for rural areas not adequately serviced and/or currently developed by private enterprises shall be entitled to ODA loan availments." NBN is very much a telecommunications project. The law further states: "The Neda shall ensure that the ODA obtained shall be for previously identified national priority projects which are urgent or necessary. ODA shall not be accepted or utilized solely because of its availability, convenience or accessibility." The project arguably does not satisfy the first description of being urgent or necessary (as testified to by UP Professors Raul Fabella and Emmanuel De Dios), while the ZTE deal smells very much like the second, with the additional stink of a supplier-driven, graft-ridden transaction to boot. Seems to me a clear violation of the law, if ever I saw one.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu.

For Microtel Inns, maiden offer may be in the works

Company exec does not discount IPO conduct in '09

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DAVAO CITY—FOR MICROTEL INNS & Suites (Pilipinas) Inc., an initial public offering may not be too far off, now that it has completed an aggressive expansion thrust to open four new facilities worth an estimated P656 million.

Company president Jose Mari del Rosario said in an interview an IPO was not yet being seriously considered, but that this could be done in late 2009 if a management decision was made.

"What we want to focus on now is to make a good play, but we feel (Microtel) is a good product," Del Rosario said.

The official represents the Phinma group in the local master franchise given out by the Global Hyatt Hotel group.

Microtel expects to launch its 160-room facility on Mactan Island in Cebu worth about P256 million in mid-2008, along with the 50-room, P80-million facility in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija.

A third one is due for launch in October 2008 in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, which will also have 50 rooms.

The year-long construction of the fourth one—the 150-room, P240-million Microtel at the SM Mall of Asia complex in Pasay City—is expected to start in December.

"With the four (facilities) opened by 2008, we will be achieving our target of having 10 units within the first 10 years of our operation," Del Rosario said.

Microtel Pilipinas has six existing facilities, with the newest one here having started accepting guests on Sept. 27 and is due for a grand opening in December.

Microtel Davao is fully funded by the franchisee—the Floreindo group, which also owns the high-end Pearl Farm in Samal Island—just like ones in Baguio and Boracay.

But Del Rosario said Microtel Pilipinas was also open to a minority stake, especially when the franchisee preferred a joint venture, as in the case with the branches in Tarlac, Cavite and Batangas.

He added that the company's long-term goal was to have a Microtel facility in as many provinces as possible, especially in established and emerging tourist destinations.

Del Rosario said the firm is currently considering opportunities in General Santos City and Cagayan de Oro City in Mindanao; Cebu City in the Visayas; Angeles City in Central Luzon; Laoag City in Northern Luzon; and four locations in Metro Manila.

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PELAC Peso Fixed Income Fund	1.0218	1.0264
PELAC Peso Equity Fund	1.3225	1.2867
PELAC Balanced Fund	0.9925	0.9733

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

*Fund prices are net of transaction costs

Thrift banks seek access to hedging tools

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S THRIFT BANKS HAVE asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to allow them to become end-users of derivatives or sophisticated hedging mechanisms.

During the general membership meeting of the Chamber of Thrift Banks on Friday, bank officials reminded the BSP of their hedging needs in their effort to draw up a new framework for the liberalization of the use of derivatives.

"Allowing thrift banks to engage in derivatives activities will give them the opportunity to actively and effectively manage their foreign exchange and interest rate risks, thus maintaining their competitiveness," said Alfredo Yao, president of CTB and Philippine Business Bank, in a report presented to members.

Under earlier drafts of the proposed new rules on derivatives, thrift banks, rural banks and cooperative banks will be allowed to engage in derivatives transactions as end-users, their transactions restricted to BSP-authorized dealers and brokers. They must also comply with prescribed capital for market risk.

But that provision for small banks was deleted in subsequent drafts, Yao said.

"On the revised exposure draft circular governing a bank's derivative activities, we appealed to the BSP for the need to revert to the original draft's provision which allowed thrift banks to engage in derivatives transactions as end-user," he said.

A derivative is a form of security, such as an option or futures contract, whose value depends on the performance of an underlying security or asset.

Its value changes with that of its underlying commodity or index, such as interest rate, price of a financial asset, foreign exchange rate, indices of financial asset prices or interest rate or foreign exchange rates, or credit rating or credit index.

Financial derivatives activities also include transactions in cash instruments.

Prior to the BSP's approval, banks will still be required to apply for additional authority to engage in all other financial derivatives.

There are four types of additional authority:

- Expanded Dealer Authority—for banks with comprehensive and integrated risk management and sales practices that are deemed appropriate and adequate for the level of derivatives activities ranging from plain vanilla to the more sophisticated derivatives products.
- Limited Dealer Authority—for banks wishing to operate as a dealer only in specific derivatives products.
- Expanded User Authority—for those who want to deal with a wider array of financial derivatives.
- Limited User Authority—for those wishing to engage, as end-user, in specific derivatives.

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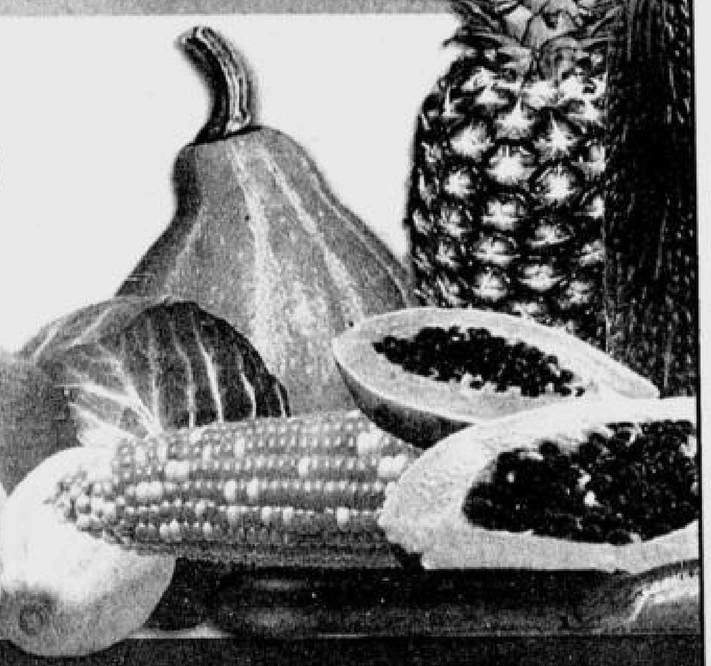

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SEMINARS AND EVENTS (as of September 27, 2007)

October 4, 2007 (Thursday)

Special Events (WTCMM Lobby):

1:00pm - 3:00pm	Product Launching *by:* Univet Agricultural Products
3:30pm - 5:00pm	Cooking Demonstration *by:* Organic Producers Trade Assoc.

October 5, 2007 (Friday)

Seminars (Hall A, WTCMM):

10:30am - 5:30pm	• Management of Sows & Piglets • Growing the Future - Richel Greenhouses • Raising Sunshine, Free-Ranged, Grass-Fed Pasture Poultry *by:* French Le Club *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
10:30am - 12:30pm	How to Start a Meat Section in Small & Medium Sized Supermarkets *by:* Meat Importers Traders Assoc. *(Seminar Rm. 2)* Monitoring & Evaluating the Socio-Economic Impact of BT Corn in the Philippines *by:* Monsanto Phils. *(Seminar Rm. 3)*
1:00pm - 3:00pm	• Nutritional Strategies to Prevent Scouring in Piglets • Biosecurity Measures During Disease Outbreak *by:* Univet Nutrition & Animal Healthcare Co. *(Seminar Rm. 2)* Technological Trends in Organic Farming & International Organic Certification *by:* Herbana Farms *(Seminar Rm. 3)*
3:30pm - 5:30pm	The Essentials of Managing Common Pig Diseases at Herd Level *by:* San Miguel Foods, Inc. *(Seminar Rm. 2)* High Productivity as a Result of an Optimum Climate *by:* SKOV *(Seminar Rm. 3)*

Special Events (WTCMM Lobby):

10:30am - 5:00pm	*Sponsored by:* San Miguel Foods, Inc.

October 6, 2007 (Saturday)

Seminars (Hall A, WTCMM):

10:30am - 12:30pm	Supplying Fresh Produce to the Supermarkets *by:* Phil. Amalgamated Supermarket Assoc. *(Seminar Rm. 1)* Pangasius World Trends & Management Opportunities *by:* Vitarich Corp. *(Seminar Rm. 2)* • Indigenous Plants for Health & Wellness • Avocado & Coconut-Based Products • Essential Oils • Malungay for Wellness & Business *by:* Bureau of Agricultural Research *(Seminar Rm. 3)*
1:00pm - 3:00pm	All About Herbs (Medicinal Herbs & Culinary Herbs) *by:* Agri-Aqua Network Int'l. *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
1:00pm - 5:30pm	• Philippine Fisheries Investment Environment • Ornamental Fish Raising • Farming of Sea Cucumber, Sea Horse & Abalone • Farming of Sea Urchin • Modular Cage Farming of Bangus • Pond Polyculture of Caranx, Grouper, Red Snapper & Siganid w/ Bangus • Farming of Red Tilapia *by:* Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
1:00pm - 3:00pm	• Temperature Management During Handling of Fresh Produce • Ensuring Quality & Safety of Fresh Produce in Supermarkets *by:* Postharvest Horticulture Training & Research *(Seminar Rm. 3)*
3:30pm - 5:30pm	• Economics of Goat Raising • Goat & Sheep Marketing • Forage & Pasture Development • Health & Nutrition *by:* Federation of Goat & Sheep Producers & Assoc. of the Phils. *(Seminar Rm. 1)* The Organic Challenge: • The Baras Town, Rizal Achievement in Becoming the 1st Organic Town in the Philippines • Updates in the Organic and Slowfood Movements • Earthworms in Your Organic Farm *by:* Organic Producers Trade Assoc. *(Seminar Rm. 3)*

Special Events (WTCMM Lobby):

10:30am - 12:00nn	Agri-Kapihan Forum *by:* Agri-Aqua Network Int'l.
1:00pm - 3:00pm	Cooking Demonstration "Megaranlisadong Sarap" *by:* Mega Fishing
2:00pm - 5:00pm	O! My Gulay Cooking Contest Pinaka-Best Agricultural Harvest Awarding *(Venue: Hall A, WTCMM)*
3:30pm - 5:00pm	Cooking Demonstration Application of Organic Fiber in Meat Processing for Value Added Products *by:* Bureau of Animal Industry

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NOKIA'S mobile phones will soon provide users with more games and wider access to the Internet.

Nokia: From cell phone maker to Internet company

By Tina G. Santos

FROM BEING A MOBILE phone handset manufacturer to an Internet company.

This is basically the path Nokia—known for innovative cell phone products—is heading to, as it unveiled plans to stretch its territory by venturing into the world of services and software,

The "Nokia Go Play" event brought company honchos, journalists from all over Asia, and techie enthusiasts together in Singapore recently for the worldwide launch of a new Internet platform called "Ovi."

"With the introduction of Ovi, Nokia is expanding its focus from mobile devices to offering a wide range of Internet services," said Urpo Karjalainen, Nokia SVP for customer and market operations in the Asia Pacific.

The move was readily understandable as Nokia said that 700 million out of the 900 million Nokia users around the world are accessing the Internet from their Nokia devices.

Company executives even noted that the mobile devices had become the most popular platform, even referring to it as the "fourth screen"—next to cinema, TV and PC.

Music store, gaming platform

Ovi, the Finnish world for "door," is not only the gateway to Nokia services but also a place where people can get digital content, create and share media, connect to Web communities and unlock other potentials of the Internet.

Ovi can be accessed from a personal computer, but its real benefits are experienced when accessed from a mobile device, said Ilkka Raiskinen, senior vice president for Nokia Multimedia.

"With the launch of Ovi, Nokia is integrating the mobile device, user interface and Internet services to make it easier to create, share and explore a wide range of digital experience on the go," he said.

Two new services—the Nokia Music Store and N-gage gaming platform—were launched as part of Ovi. These were prompted by the rising demand for music and games on mobile devices, Raiskinen said.

Citing Nokia's recent consumer research, he said more than 50 percent of subscribers were playing games on their devices—a very high number exceeded only by text messages and photo taking.

Also, more than 75 percent of Nokia's subscribers listen to music several times a week, the study showed.

The Nokia Music Store offers millions of tracks from major artists around the world. It allows users to browse, download and stream music or sync those into their devices.

Music lovers can easily transfer purchased songs to their device using Windows Media Player or with the Nokia Music PC.

Nokia has also revamped its N-gage system from a simple device to a dedicated mobile games platform that allows players to browse N-gage games, try them for free, then purchase (over the air or on PC) and play from any one of the tens of millions of compatible Nokia devices in the market.

Play with friends

Players can also share the fun by connecting with friends, challenging other players around the world and participating in community activities in the N-gage Arena.

Popular games to be carried include The Sims Pets, Tiger Woods PGA Tour, EA Sports FIFA 08, World Rally Championship and Crash Bandicoot.

N-gage will be compatible with a variety of Nokia S60 devices. Two months from now, N-gage will be compatible with Nokia N73, Nokia N81 and Nokia N81 8GB, Nokia N93 and N93i, Nokia N95 and Nokia N95 8GB.

"Combined with powerful devices, world class titles and brands, and interactive social networking features, the N-gage service takes the mobile gaming experience beyond traditional boundaries," Raiskinen said.

The N-gage service will be available globally in November.

Navigation service

Nokia Maps is being integrated into the Ovi as well. This turns a mobile device into a PND (personal navigation device) and is now a standard feature in all Nokia N series multimedia computers, Nokia E series devices and a wide range of Nokia mobile phones.

Nokia Maps is free and provides mapping in over 100 countries, routing points of interest—tourist attractions, hotels and restaurants—into a Nokia handset. Subscribers can purchase city guides and voice-guided navigation for those devices with integrated GPS or GPS enhancements.

Ovi.com going live

Nokia said the Ovi experience and features will be expanded continuously—driven by consumer feedback and input.

The first version of Ovi.com is expected to go live by the end of the year in English and will expand to more markets and with other languages in the first half of 2008.

Republic of the Philippines
LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

LRT LINE 1 NORTH EXTENSION PROJECT

1. The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) invites potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the bidding of the Contract Packages described below. The funds have been provided for by the Government of Philippines (GOP). The Contracts shall be executed on a "Design-Build" Contract basis.

Name of Contract	Package A	Package B	Package C
Location	Metro Manila	Metro Manila	Metro Manila
Brief Description	Construction of Viaduct and Pedestrian Overpasses	Construction of Stations and Station Modifications	Electro-Mechanical Works
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pesos 2.8 Billion	Pesos 0.83 Billion	Pesos 2.04 Billion
Contract Duration	22 Months	22 Months	22 Months

2. Prospective Bidders should possess a Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License applicable to the respective type and cost of the said contracts. Prospective Bidders for each Package should have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of said Package and should meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility shall be evaluated on a pass/fail basis.
3. Bidding shall be conducted through an open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act" and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or entities with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines.
4. The Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) will issue Eligibility Documents to the prospective Bidders upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) and payment of a non-refundable fee of Twenty Five Thousand Pesos (PhP 25,000.00) for each Package to the Light Rail Transit Authority Interested bidder shall submit the duly accomplished Eligibility Documents to the SBAC at the address given below, on or before the deadline for receipt of Eligibility Documents. Only those bidders passing the Eligibility Check will be entitled to purchase the bidding documents.
5. The SBAC shall open the bids at the time, date and place specified. The SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall determine each bidder's compliance with the documents required to be submitted for the Technical Proposal of the Bid, as prescribed in Instructions to Bidders of IRR-A. For this purpose, on the Day of Opening of Bids, the SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall check the submitted documents of each bidder against a checklist of required documents to ascertain if they are all present in the first (Technical) envelope, using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. If a bidder submits all required documents, it shall be rated "passed" for that particular requirement. In this regard, failure to submit a requirement, or an incomplete or patently insufficient submission, shall be considered "failed" for the particular requirement concerned. In case one or more of the above required documents in the first envelope of a particular Bid is missing, incomplete or patently insufficient, the SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall rate the bid concerned as "failed" and immediately return to the Bidder concerned its second (Financial) envelope unopened. Immediately after determining compliance with the requirements in the first bid envelope (Technical Proposal), the SBAC shall forthwith collect all the second bid envelopes (Financial Proposals) of the remaining complying bidders, whose first bid envelope was rated "passed" and seal them in a separate BOX in the presence of the Bidder's representatives of the complying bidders, who may also initial on the seal.
6. This being a **"Design – Build"** Contract, the second (Financial) envelope of the complying Bidders shall be opened only after due evaluation for the responsiveness of the Technical Proposals and its compliance to the Performance Specifications/Employer's Requirements. The Date of the Opening of the Financial Envelope shall be informed to all Bidders, whose Technical Proposal, after evaluation is found technically responsive and compliant to the Performance Specifications/ Employer's Requirements. In the Financial Proposal (in the second envelope), in case one or more of the requirements of a particular bid is missing, incomplete or patently insufficient, and/or if the submitted total bid price exceeds the ABC, the SBAC shall rate the bid concerned as "failed". Bids that are determined to contain all the requirements for the second (Financial) envelope shall be rated "passed" and shall immediately be considered for detailed evaluation of the Financial Bids.
7. Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the contract. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
8. The schedule for the various activities and the venue are as follows:

SBAC Activities	Package A	Package B	Package C
Receipt of Letter of Intent (LOI) & Issuance of Eligibility Documents	8 AM to 5 PM, October 8 to 22, 2007 Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) Secretariat, Administration Building, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound, Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila, Philippines 9001		
Receipt of Eligibility Documents (Opening & Deadline)	9 AM November 21, 2007	9AM November 22, 2007	9AM November 23, 2007
	Special Bids & Awards Committee (SBAC) Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City		
Issuance of Bid Documents	8 AM - 5 PM December 5 to 12, 2007		
Pre-Bid Conference	9AM January 7, 2008 at the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City		
Receipt of Technical & Financial Bids & Opening of Technical Bids (Opening & Deadline)	9AM February 18, 2008	9AM February 19, 2008	9AM February 20, 2008
	Special Bids & Awards Committee (SBAC) Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City		
Opening of Financial Bids	9AM March 17, 2008 Special Bids & Awards Committee (SBAC) Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City		

9. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the Eligibility Check at the address given below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP50, 000.00) for each Package, to the Light Rail Transit Authority. The bidding documents shall be received personally by the Bidder or his authorized representative
10. All Bids must be accompanied by Bid Security in the appropriate form and amount as specified in R.A. 9184 and the Bid Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
11. The Light Rail Transit Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Eligibility Documents or Bids, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC)
Administration Building, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound
Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila
Philippines 9001
Telephone: +63-2-833-2466, Facsimile: +63-2-831-6449

(PDI - Oct. 1, 2007)

THE MOBILE HOUSE

Perfect for the on-the-go geeks

By Jason de Villa

IT ISN'T ONLY GADGETS THAT ARE BEcoming slimmer and smaller. A team from the Technological University of Munich has created what could be the perfect mobile home. They call it the micro compact home (m-ch), a cube measuring about nine feet tall, wide and deep. It sounds like a claustrophobe's nightmare, but panoramic windows should ease that crowded sensation.

You have all your music in your iPod video, your movies in your Archos 704, your games on your PSP, and you can get onto the Web with your laptop and 3G phone from practically anywhere. Buy a small lot in practically any place you want, and set up each lot with support structures (basically posts, an extension cord for electricity, and a water source) where you can dock the m-ch easily in each place. Pack all your gadgets into the m-ch, and tow it anywhere you want to go.

By the way, the m-ch cost about 25,000 to 34,000 euros each (approximately P1.7 million).

Visit http://www.microcompacthome.com/ to check out this great cube of a home.

IF ONE isn't claustrophobic, a techno geek could be connected to virtually anywhere from this multi-media 'micro compact home.'

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ISABELA
Ilagan

Office of the Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela, through its Bids and Awards Committee, is inviting interested distributors, wholesalers and/or suppliers, Licensed Security Agencies to apply for eligibility and to participate in the sealed competitive bidding for the following

PROJECT REFERENCE	ABC	BIDDING FEE
A. Procurement of Fire Extinguishers (Brand New & refill).	P 206,400.00	P 500.00
B. Supply of Security Services for deployment to various offices/hospitals in the province of Isabela	P 4,050,000.00	P 4,000.00

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bid evaluation, and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES:

Availability of Bid Documents	October 8-9, 2007, 8AM to 5PM at the BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela.
Pre-Bid Conference	Oct. 10, 2007 at 10 AM, Governor's Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela
Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bids	Oct. 22, 2007 at 10:00 AM, BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela
Opening of Bids	Oct. 22, 2007 at 10:30 AM, Governor's Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela

Complete set of bid proposals/forms may be acquired from the BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol Ilagan, Isabela upon payment of non-refundable bidding fee stated above at the Provincial Treasurer's Office

The Provincial Government of Isabela reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality and award the contract to the bidder whose proposal has been evaluated by the BAC as the most advantageous to the Provincial Government and the right to confiscate the bid bond and/or pursue appropriate legal action should the winning bidder refuse to accept the award.

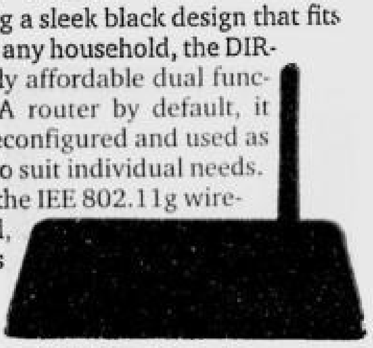
Further, the Provincial Government assumes no obligations whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that they may incur in this undertaking nor does it guarantee that an award will be made

(Sgd.) MA. THERESA ARANETA-FLORES
BAC Chairperson

(PDI–Oct. 1, 2007)

D-Link unveils new 54Mbps Wireless G Router

D-LINK INTERNATIONAL, ONE OF THE world's biggest suppliers of network products, recently unveiled the newest model of their wireless G router series—the DIR-300. Featuring a sleek black design that fits perfectly into any household, the DIR-300 is a highly affordable dual function device. A router by default, it can also be reconfigured and used as access point to suit individual needs.



"Based on the IEE 802.11g wireless standard, which is backward compatible with 802.11b, the new DIR-300 is both a router and access point at the same time, providing an all-in-one, convenient solution for consumers," said Mr. George Wong, Marketing Director, D-Link International Pte Ltd.

"Built-in Qos functionality ensures that the DIR-300 is capable of prioritizing data packets to improve the qualities of VoIP and real time multimedia streaming," he added.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Procurement of Validation Stickers and Plate Year Tags for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
2. Procurement of Aluminum Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
3. Procurement of Reflective Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008

The Land Transportation Office, through the General Funds (Funds 101) intends to apply the following amount being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for the aforesaid projects, to wit:

1. Php 17,265,941.82 – Validation Stickers and Plate Year Tags for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
2. Php 18,266,240.16 – Aluminum Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
3. Php 43,634,084.25 – Reflective Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The Land Transportation Office now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the items. The required delivery schedule will be indicated in the approved Contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Sub-Commitee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Property Section from October 1, 2007 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the BAC-Secretariat at the Property Section starting October 1, 2007 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 10,000.00, in the form of cash for each project. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Land Transportation Office will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on the following schedules at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City, to wit:

1. October 10, 2007/10:00 A.M. - Validation Stickers and Plate Year Tags for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
2. October 10, 2007/2:00 P.M. Aluminum Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
3. October 10, 2007/3:30 P.M. Reflective Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City on the following schedules, to wit:

1. October 23, 2007/10:00 A.M. Validation Stickers and Plate Year Tags for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
2. October 23, 2007/1:00 P.M. - Aluminum Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
3. October 23, 2007/3:00 P.M. - Reflective Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half percent (1 1/2%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on the following schedules at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City, to wit:

1. October 23, 2007/10:00 A.M. - Validation Stickers and Plate Year Tags for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
2. October 23, 2007/1:00 P.M. - Aluminum Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008
3. October 23, 2007/3:00 P.M. - Reflective Sheeting Materials for 1st and 2nd Quarters of CY 2008

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the said address.

The Land Transportation Office reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Land Transportation Office
Atty. Jimmy G. Pesigan – Chairman, BAC
East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 9219077 – telefax

Annabella A. Cruz – Chairman, BAC Sub-Committee
Property Section, LTO, East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 9292015 – telefax

(Sgd.) **ATTY. JIMMY G. PESIGAN**
BAC – Chairman

(PDI – October 1, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Printing of Driver's Manual
   - a. 25,000 copies of Ang Driver Na Pinoy
   - b. 32,120 copies of The Filipino Driver's Manual
2. Repair of One Roll Coating Machine
3. Repair and Rehabilitation of Mechanical Press assigned at PMP

The Land Transportation Office, through the following amount being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for the aforesaid projects intends to apply, to wit:

1 Printing of Driver's Manual through MVUC Fund:
   a. 25,000 copies of Ang Driver Na Pinoy – Php 1,275,000.00
   b. 32,120 copies of The Filipino Driver's Manual – Php 2,409,000.00
2. Repair of One Roll Coating Machine (General Fund 101) – Php 850,000.00
3. Repair and Rehabilitation of Mechanical Press assigned at Plate Making Plant (PMP) (General Fund 101) – Php 930,000.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The Land Transportation Office now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the items. The required delivery schedule will be indicated in the approved Contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Sub-Committee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Property Section from October 1, 2007 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the BAC-Secretariat at the Property Section starting October 1, 2007 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 1,000.00, in the form of cash for each project. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Land Transportation Office will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on the following schedules at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City, to wit:

1. October 11, 2007/10:00 A.M. – Printing of Driver's Manual
2. October 11, 2007/2:00 P.M. – Repair of One Roll Coating Machine
3. October 11, 2007/3:30 P.M. – Repair and Rehabilitation of Mechanical Press assigned at PMP.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the LTO-Library East Avenue, Quezon City on the following schedules, to wit:

1. October 24, 2007/10:00 A.M. – Printing of Driver's Manual
2. October 24, 2007/1:00 P.M. – Repair of One Roll Coating Machine
3. October 24, 2007/3:00 P.M. – Repair and Rehabilitation of Mechanical Press assigned at PMP.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half percent (1 1/2%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on the following schedules at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City, to wit:

1. October 24, 2007/10:00 A.M. – Printing of Driver's Manual
2. October 24, 2007/1:00 P.M. – Repair of One Roll Coating Machine
3. October 24, 2007/3:00 P.M. – Repair and Rehabilitation of Mechanical Press assigned at PMP.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the said address.

The Land Transportation Office reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Land Transportation Office
Atty. Jimmy G. Pesigan – Chairman, BAC
East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 9219077 – telefax

Annabella A. Cruz – Chairman, BAC Sub-Committee
Property Section, LTO, East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 9292015 – telefax

(Sgd.) **ATTY. JIMMY G. PESIGAN**
BAC – Chairman

(PDI-October 1, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL BROADCAST STAFF-RTVM
MALACANANG, MANILA

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Presidential Broadcast Staff-RTVM, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : **Procurement of Various Teleprompting Equipment**
Location : RTVM Bldg., Gate 6, Malacanang, Manila
Approved Budget for the Contract : Php 3,326,322.00
Delivery Period : 30 days

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

Activities	Date	Time	Place
1) Issuance of Bid Documents	Oct. 1-14, 2007	10:00 AM to 5:00 PM	PBS-RTVM
2) Pre-Bidding Conference	Oct. 12, 2007	2:00 PM	PBS-RTVM
3) Last Day of Submission and Opening of Bids	Oct. 24, 2007	10:00 AM	PBS-RTVM

Bid Documents including details of specification will be available at the PBS-RTVM Procurement Section of the Admin. and Finance Division (c/o Mr. Cyrus M. Reputana) Tel Nos. 734-5681/735-6187 to prospective bidders only upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 700.00 to the Presidential Broadcast Staff-RTVM Cashier.

The Presidential Broadcast Staff-RTVM assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **Melba B. Aligaen**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Oct. 1 & 8, 2007)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Contract for the Supply and Delivery of Billing Meters for Mactan Economic Zone

The *Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA)*, through its Corporate Operating Budget for the CY 2006 intends to apply the sum of **Php6,000,000.00** being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the ***Supply and Delivery of Billing Meters for Mactan Economic Zone.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The PEZA now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs), certified copy of Phil-GEPS Certificate of Registration, and proof of enrolment with the e-FPS from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and Delivery of Billing Meters for Mactan Economic Zone.

Bidders should have completed a single similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC within the last three (3) years and met the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. In addition, bidders must have filed their latest annual income and business tax returns (VAT and/or Percentage Taxes covering six (6) months immediately prior to the submission of bids) via the Electronic Filing and Payment System (eFPS) of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **7:30 AM to 4:30 PM on 02-15 October 2007.**

Interested bidders must submit their LOIs, certified copy of their Phil-GEPS Certificate of Registration and e-FPS enrolment **not later than 15 October 2007** at the address given below and secure the complete set of Bidding Documents therefrom upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php5,000.00.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only Bids from eligible Bidders will be opened. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 a contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

The PEZA will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference on 16 October 2007 at 2:00 PM** at the address given below.

Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below **on or before 2:00 PM of 08 November 2007.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of not less than 2.5% of the ABC or in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in amount of not less than 1% of the ABC specific to the line item. Late Bids shall not be accepted. **Bid opening shall be on 08 November 2007, 2:00 PM** at the address given below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

In case any of the above date/s is declared as a non-working holiday it will automatically be rescheduled on the next working day (same time).

Delivery is required within **ninety (90) calendar days** from date of receipt of Notice to Proceed.

The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

MACTAN ECONOMIC ZONE
6015 Lapu-Lapu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 340-0590 to 93
Fax Nos. (032) 340-0594 to 96
Website: www.peza.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **BELENA B. SUELLO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Oct. 1 & 8, 2007)

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Criteria:
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Interested applicants may directly apply and/or submit their resumé to the address indicated below:

DCB TRADING INCORPORATED
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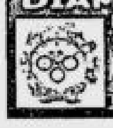

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People, Events & Products

Leading SEO gurus at confab

THE WORLD'S LEADING EXPERTS IN search engine optimization (SEO) are converging in Manila for a conference that will enable local companies, entrepreneurs and professionals expand their lucrative operations through intelligent and optimum use of the web.

SEO guru Marc Macalua said these visiting experts would show how the Web and search engines could serve as the fastest vehicle to a highly profitable market expansion of businesses, enterprises and professions.

"These experts make up the distinguished panel of speakers at the "Search Engine Marketing Conference (Semcon) Philippines 2007" that will be held at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Intercontinental on Oct. 9 and 10," said Macalua, himself a speaker and founder of SEO Philippines.

The speakers include popular blogger, author and search engine guru Aaron Wall of SEOBook.com, vice president Prashant Mehta of Yahoo! for emerging markets and monetization, CEO Michael Turner of Harvest SEO.com, Internet marketing consultant Todd Malicoat of Stuntdubl.com, cofounder and search architect Hans Kock of syndeo::media, 2007 SEO World Champion and chief executive officer Benj Arriola of US-based YDS Web Solutions Inc, founder Jonathan Casuncad of SEM Pros Philippines, b5media Inc. channel editor and Inquirer interactive media consultant Jayvee Fernandez, and search engine marketer and pay-per-click expert Elymar Apao of Jozzua.com.

Other speakers are SEO project manager Rhiza Sanchez of MBS Tek Inc, marketing director Andrian Lee of AsiaPay Philippines, IT director and chief information officer Jay Estaris of Century Properties, marketing and Web services head Faith Ponte of Bigfoot Global Solutions Inc, marketing director Dustin Andaya of IslandRose.net, problogger Abe Olandres of Yugatech.com, Web and usability consultant and user group manager Regnard Kreisler C. Raquedan of Adobe User Group-Philippines, and new media director Jose Carlo Medina of Level Up! Games.

'Very potent tool'

"These experts will speak on a wide range of topics, including technical details, on how websites can be used as a very potent tool for various purposes, benefiting big companies, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs, business executives, professionals, chief information/technology/marketing officers, Web masters and developers, content providers, financial and Internet bankers, IT/MIS managers, cyber lawyers, policy makers, educators, venture capital firms, managing directors and CEOs, direct marketing directors and managers, CRM agency owners, and those who develop and implement business strategies geared towards Internet and digital marketing," Macalua said.

More information can be obtained from SEO Philippines, Fiera de Manila Inc, and IMVSolutions.com Inc (896-0639, 899-6893, 896-0637; fax 896-0637, 890-2101; e-mail fiera@info.com.ph; and Website www.imvsolutions.com).

"Among the topics are the latest factors directly affecting website rankings in search engines like Google, Yahoo! and MSN, what works and what doesn't, step-by-step instruction on the basics of SEO, and the latest techniques to get top rankings for your site," Macalua added.

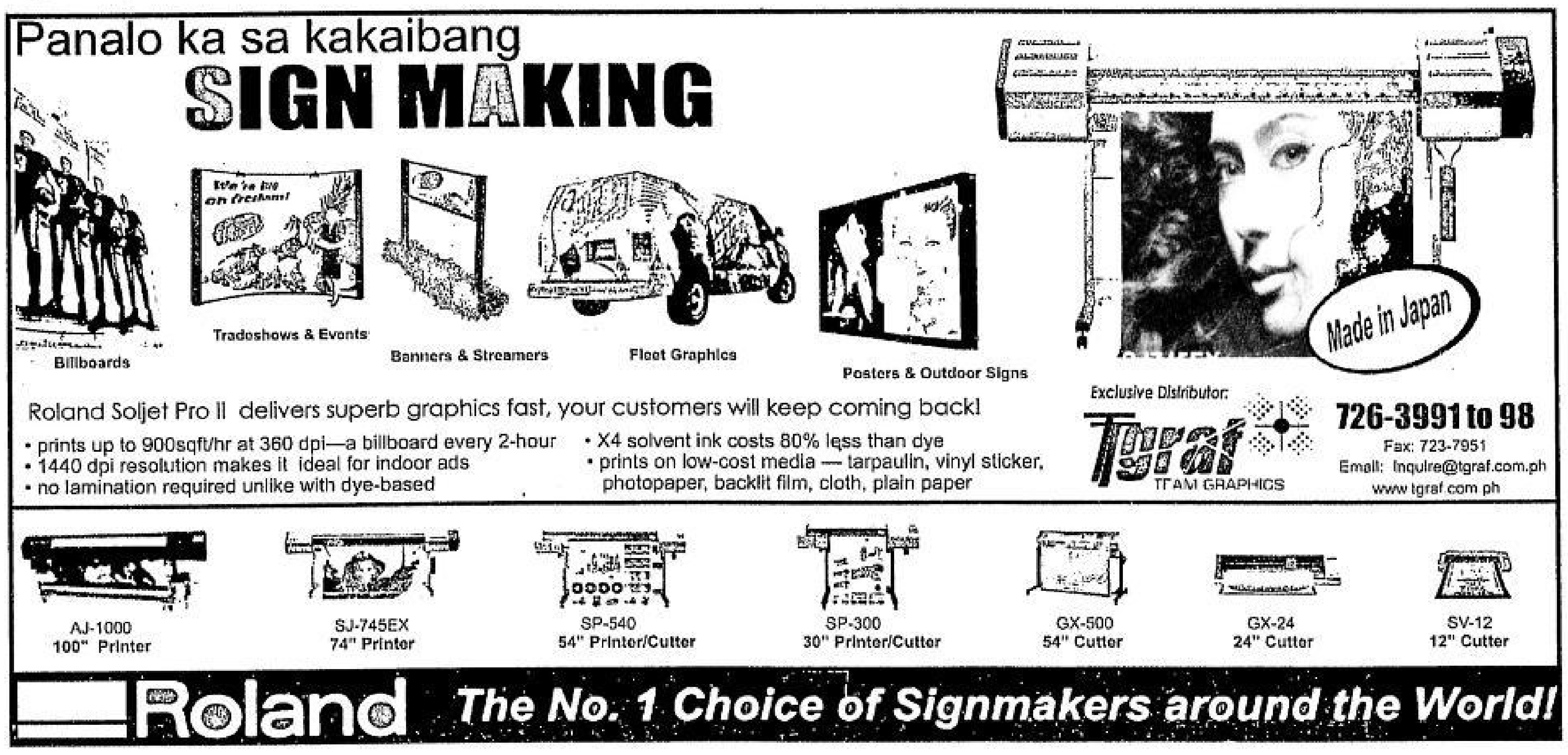
Also to be discussed are SEO for mega-sites, tried and tested keyword research tactics, effective Web copywriting, link building tactics and techniques, advance link building strategies, uncovering innovative competitor link strategies, the best of pay-per-click, and its pitfalls, among many others.

White Rock Triathlon attracts hardcore athletes

HARDCORE ATHLETES PREPARE to take on the most prestigious long distance triathlon race in the country, the White Rock Triathlon. This 2007 edition is supported by the White Rock Beach Resort, New Balance, Rush Fitness Water, Fury Eyewear, Fitness First and David's Salon. 112 entries will toe the starting line in the annual swim-bike-run endurance test starting from the White Rock Beach Resort in Subic, Zambales. Slated for Oct. 6, the race has attracted international racers from Australia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Guam. Since 2004, this grueling race has been a mainstay in the local triathlon calendar and is known as the race that truly tests one's mettle in the sport of triathlon. Racers have to ocean swim 2 km at the resort, then ride their bikes for 91 km-passing through the towns of Subic, Castillejos, San Marcelino, San Narciso, San Felipe, Maloma and Cabangan in the province of Zambales. As if that is not enough, the athletes will need to run 20 km from White Rock Beach Resort to Olongapo and SBMA before they can claim to be triathlon "Rockstars" (term coined for finishers of this event).

Property festival at SM North Edsa

EX-LINK MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING SERVICES CORP HOLDS the Property Festival at SM North Edsa-East Mall Atrium area from Oct. 4 to 17. An on-site setup of the "Pocket Garden" by My Mother's Garden Design by Vincent Ferrer is also featured. Participants include Filinvest Land Inc (Timberland Heights), Filinvest Land Inc (Promax), Queen Carish Realty, Verdan Point Development Corp, New San Jose (Victoria Towers), New San Jose (Valenzuela Condo), DMCI Homes, IPM Realty and Development Corp, Asian Land Strategies Corp, Century Properties, Edsa Grand Residences, Camella Homes, Phinma Property Holdings Corp, Powerland Realty, and a lot more. The Festival also features free coaching and tips on having home loans sessions and free coaching and tips in getting contractors in building home sessions. For more information, call Ex-Link Corp at 640-7439, 643-3887, or log on to www.exlinkevents.com.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Del Monte acquires Indian firm

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SINGAPORE-LISTED PINEAPPLE PRODUCTS distributor Del Monte Pacific Ltd., a majority-owned company of condiments king Joselito Campos Jr. is expanding into the Indian market with the acquisition of a 40-percent stake in a fresh fruits and vegetable exporter.

In a statement released to the Singapore Stock Exchange, Del Monte said Campos, its managing director and CEO, signed last Sept. 28 definitive agreements by which the company would acquire a 40.1-percent interest in FieldFresh Foods Private Limited, an agricultural joint venture between Bharti Enterprises India Ltd. and E.L. Rothschild Ltd.

Del Monte said its effective interest in FieldFresh will be acquired through its purchase of 80.2 percent of E.L. Rothschild, which in turn owns 50 percent of Fieldfresh.

The Rothschild family will remain as a 19.8-percent shareholder in the company which will be renamed DMPL India Limited.

E.L. Rothschild is a private Rothschild family investment company with interests worldwide, including a business which provides growth capital to companies in India's fast growing economy. It also provides Indian companies access to international technology, distribution and brands. It is managed by its founders, Sir Evelyn de Rothschild and Lady Lynn Forrester de Rothschild.

FieldFresh is currently engaged in growing, packing, marketing and distributing fresh fruits and vegetables for export to Europe and other export markets, as well as for sale in the domestic Indian market. The entry of Del Monte as a strategic partner will give FieldFresh expertise in new crops, as well as in product development, food processing and brand marketing. At the same time, the expanded FieldFresh operation will have access to Del Monte's export marketing network.

Marco Polo to expand Davao hotel

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DAVAO CITY—MARCO POLO HOTELS Management Ltd. is expanding its facilities here with a convention center and additional rooms as Mindanao's largest city attracts the growing interest of convention organizers and business executives on leisure travel.

Stanley Lau, general manager of Marco Polo Davao, said in an interview the company had not yet set a definite amount to invest but that this was "easily more than P300 million."

"We are still in talks with building designers, but the owners—the Dominguez family through Halifax Capital Resources Inc.—have given instructions toward expansion as soon as possible," Lau said. "Money is not an issue."

He said the priority is to build a convention center that could accommodate 1,000 people at a time and possibly 100 additional rooms.

Marco Polo Davao's existing 18-story building has 245 rooms and a ballroom that is big enough for 500 people.

Lau, a native of Hong Kong where MPHML is based, said the planned new building would rise on a vacant lot at the back of the hotel.

"Our priority is a new and larger convention venue and its design would determine the number of the additional rooms," he said.

The veteran hotelier said between 70 percent and 80 percent of Marco Polo Davao's existing rooms were occupied, which "are quite healthy numbers."

At the same time, Lau said the firm has been spending on sprucing up the nine-year-old hotel, including the repainting of the exterior areas as well as the refurbishing of the rooms.

"We have been doing this little by little [over] the past two years, starting with the topmost floors," he said.

Further, Marco Polo expects to finish work on a P50-million recreation complex on its fourth floor by yearend.

Having been soft-launched in August during the local Kadayawan festival, the complex called The Deck comprises a restaurant, a function room, a spa and a fitness center that includes a 25-meter swimming pool.

"All of these are part of our efforts to offer amenities that would provide the pampering and indulgence that our market wants," Lau said.

"This is also a strong statement from us about the opportunities that we see as Davao City starts to realize its potential as big tourist drawer," he said.

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A FIRST FOR THE PHILIPPINES

Zobel gets highest alumni award from Harvard

ZOBEL de Ayala

> 'Success entails combining profitability with a broader contribution to society'

JAIME AUGUSTO ZOBEL DE AYALA, CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE of Ayala Corp., has become the first Filipino to receive the highest achievement award for a graduate of Harvard Business School.

Zobel is also the youngest alumnus to receive the Alumni Achievement Award from Harvard Business School, which gives the award annually to "distinguished graduates who have contributed significantly to their companies and communities while upholding the highest standards and values."

According to the award-giving council, "the outstanding men and women who receive this most important honor represent the best in the alumni body and inspire all those who aspire to have an impact on business and society.

Zobel received a Master of Business Administration degree from Harvard Business School in 1987. He had graduated from Harvard College in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in Economics, cum laude.

In between those years, he worked overseas before joining the Ayala group of companies, where he held several line positions.

Today, together with his younger brother Fernando, who serves as president and chief operating officer of Ayala Corp., Zobel is credited for the Ayala group's successes in telecommunications and water distribution as well as its continued successes in real estate development and financial services.

Recipients

The first to receive the Harvard Business School Alumni Achievement Award was Robert McNamara, in 1968, when he was president of the World Bank. Other outstanding recipients since then have

ZOBEL, B2-2

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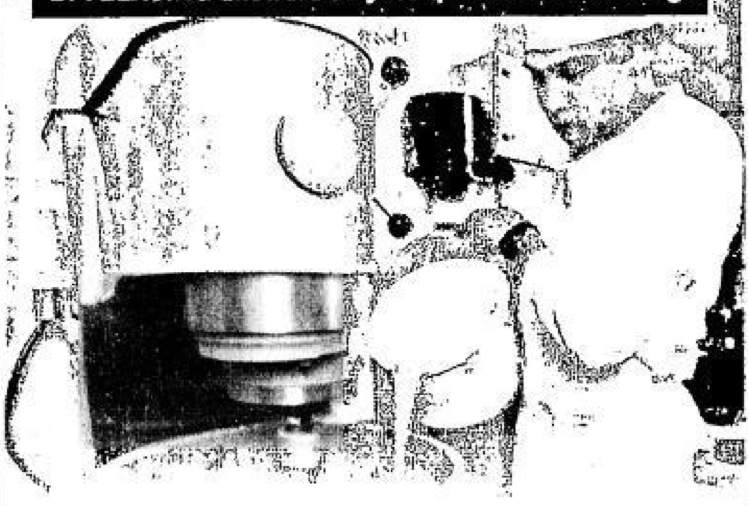

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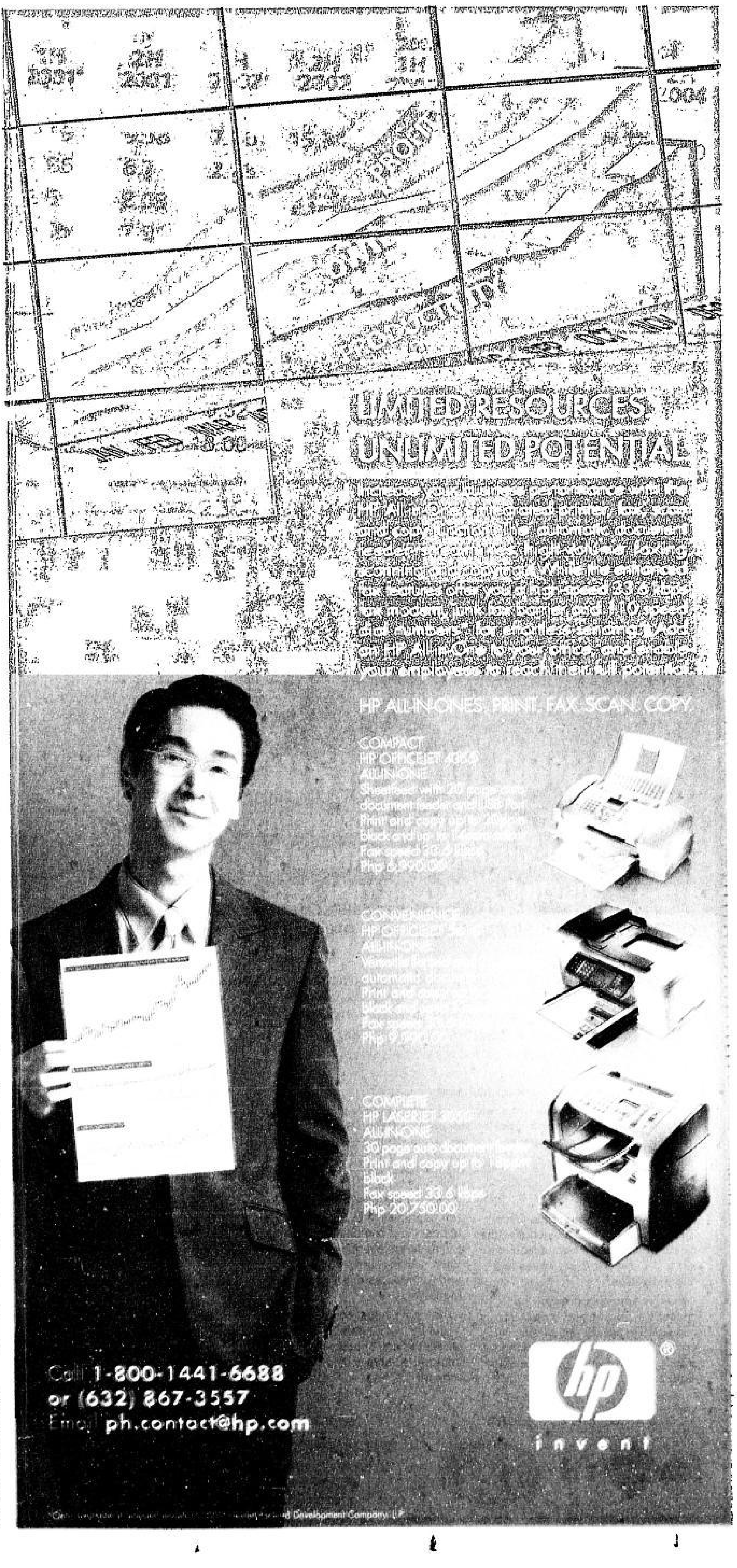

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Zobel gets highest alumni award...

From page B2-1

included Daniel Burke, chair and CEO emeritus of Johnson & Johnson; Dr. Daniel Vasella, chair and CEO of Novartis AG; Ratan Tata, chair of India's Tata group; Louis Gerstners Jr., former chair and chief executive of IBM; Phillip Yeo, chair of Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research; and Minoru Makihara, former chair of Mitsubishi Corp.

To Zobel and this year's four other recipients, the awards were presented at Harvard on Sept. 27 in a ceremony hosted by Prof. Jay O. Light, dean of Harvard Business School.

The other recipients were Donna Dubinsky of Numenta, an intelligent-computing software firm; A. M. Mixon III of Invacare Corp., the world's leading manufacturer and distributor of home healthcare products; Sir Martin Sorrell of global advertising company WPP Group PLC; and Hansjoerg Wyss of Synthes Inc., manufacturer and distributor of orthopedic implants and instruments.

Ideal candidate

To Zobel, Professor Light said: "The impact you have had through Ayala Corp. makes you an ideal candidate. This award is a symbol of Harvard's appreciation of the standard you have set."

That standard has deep roots in the Ayala group—in the values and principles it stands for, as much as in its history and track record.

It is reflected in a remark Zobel made when he accepted the Management Man of the Year award: "Success is not measured by quick and one-time gains but by enduring beliefs and created by a disciplined approach to creating value. Second, success also entails combining profitability with a broader contribution to society."

The business successes of the 173-year-old Ayala group are well known, as are its wide-ranging contributions to social development. But not always seen are the ways it has affected countless Filipino lives and many communities.

While Ayala has always chosen to engage itself actively in the national development process, it continues to take this step further by finding solutions to various socioeconomic challenges. Many enterprising Filipinos—from merchants and service providers at the Ayala malls, to microfinance institutions through Bank of the Philippine Islands, and to small entrepreneurs that rely on Globe Telecom Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc. for their livelihood—are able to nurture their dreams through the Ayala group.

> 'A company with a long history [needs to] keep fresh the energies on which it was founded while retaining the enduring values that define it'

Similarly far-reaching are the group's sustained actions to promote education in training student leaders, providing elementary education and spearheading the multisector initiative called Gearing up Internet Literacy and Access for Students, or Gilas, which helps to provide Internet access and basic computer literacy programs for students in all Philippine public high schools.

For certain, these social development contributions wouldn't be possible without the business successes, but the correlation between the two is deliberate, and has been rooted in the Ayala group's nearly two-century Philippine heritage.

Zobel calls Ayala's social development work "promoting the public good through the benefits of excellent professional management."

That is a well-appreciated statement of underlying characteristics that exhibit the conglomerate's long-term vision and commitment to national development.

The public's trust

The corporate professionalism and the social commitment have given Ayala a most solid reputation for integrity, and over many decades earned the public's trust for the Ayala brand.

"Building on trust has enabled us to mobilize talent and to bring together the best people to cater to an increasingly diverse array of customer needs," Zobel says.

It has also enabled Ayala to build capital and bring in some of the world's most respected corporations—including Mitsubishi Corp., Singapore Telecom and Development Bank of Singapore, among others—as strategic partners.

With its "human capital"—a highly empowered organization—and strong, global partners, the Ayala group today includes four listed corporations (Ayala Land, Bank of Philippine Islands, Globe Telecom and Manila Water) and accounts for about one-third of the Philippine Stock Exchange index.

For the corporate and other triumphs, Zobel pays tribute, first, to his father, Jaime Zobel de Ayala—who was voted Management Man of the Year in 1987—for decentralizing the group management structure in the 1980s and building the management foundations of present-day Ayala.

Second, he cites the leadership sharing he has with his brother, Fernando—"in an arrangement that it not very common in public, private or family institutions ... The Ayala of today would not be where it is without the leadership Fernando has provided on myriad fronts and for his equal participation in decisions I have made."

And he acknowledges the group's organization—and the macro context in which it functions.

"Leadership," he says, "depends on the corporate context, economic history and organizational capability of any institution."

"Beneath the bright surface of performance of any business leader is the solid substance built by a longer history of a larger community of talented, motivated and disciplined executives that made such performance possible," he adds.

The Ayala group "collective wisdom, drive and vision shape and constantly refresh my own," Zobel says. "At the most senior level, we take pride in working as colleagues and partners, whether one works at the holding company or at the operating level.

"We like to encourage a spirit of collegiality, sharing and constructive criticism. The best ideas that flow out are certainly not always mine and the many backgrounds and experiences of our executive rank are too valuable to be kept limited in specific roles."

Ayala's evolution

The Ayala group itself has changed in character over the years, Zobel observes. In the past century, what had started as an agriculture- and trading-based group grew into a major Philippine manufacturing and services concern.

The Ayala group started investing in sectors that have become its core businesses well before Zobel joined it in 1981. It pioneered in real estate development in 1960 and modern banking in 1970. It went into telecommunications in 1974 and electronics manufacture in 1988. As its platform for social development contribution, it established in 1961 what has become Ayala Foundation.

And then, "the world changed on us," Zobel recalls. "Competition in real estate exploded. The banking and telecom sectors were liberalized and new markets were created by the resurgence of new technologies. Globalization altered most of the landscape ... And corporate social responsibility moved into the center of business concerns."

"History is not destiny," Zobel says. "The challenge for a company with a long history is how to keep fresh the energies on which it was founded while retaining the enduring values that define it. For the Ayala group, the challenge has been how to keep succeeding in changing times by building on the fundamental strengths with which we began."

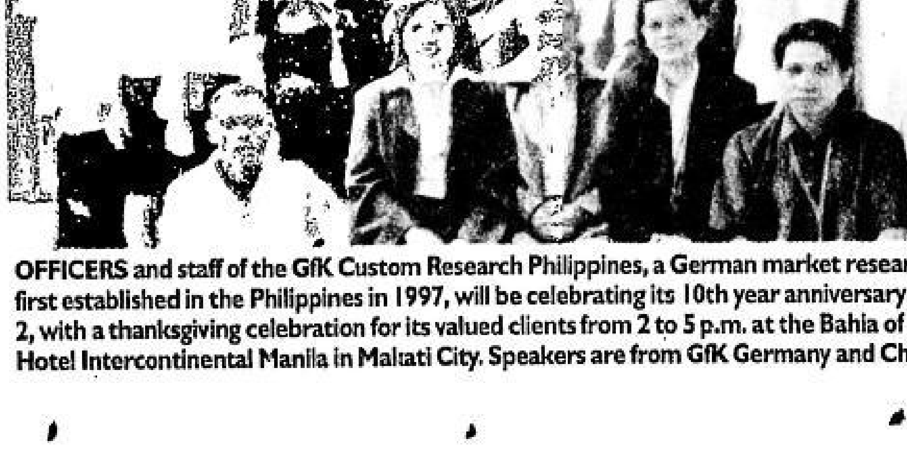
Today the Ayala group focuses on three major businesses—real estate, financial services and telecom—plus emergent businesses in electronics manufacturing, technology investments, water distribution, automotive dealerships, international real estate markets and business processing outsourcing.

Zobel is also chair of Globe Telecom, Bank of the Philippine Islands and Integrated Microelectronics Inc.; vice chair of Ayala Land Inc.; and co-vice chair of Ayala Foundation. He is a member of the JP Morgan International Council, Mitsubishi Corp. International Advisory Committee, Toshiba International Advisory Group, Asia Business Council, Harvard University Asia Center Advisory Committee and the board of trustees of the Asian Institute of Management.

He also serves on the national council of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-US), and chairs WWF Philippines.

The involvement in the environmental movement is one of the ways Zobel demonstrates his personal profound concern for the planet and future generations. And among underprivileged children in the Philippines, is perhaps the most recognizable face of Children's Hour, of which he is a trustee.

In all likelihood, it is a concern that the Harvard Business School award-giving council shares.



OFFICERS and staff of the GfK Custom Research Philippines, a German market research firm first established in the Philippines in 1997, will be celebrating its 10th year anniversary on Oct. 2, with a thanksgiving celebration for its valued clients from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Bahia of the Hotel Intercontinental Manila in Makati City. Speakers are from GfK Germany and China.

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October is Intellectual Property Rights Month.

Know what IPR is all about.

What is IPR?

IPR stands for Intellectual Property Rights which are the exclusive rights given to the inventors for their innovations and creations. These rights are protected by the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines or Republic Act No.8293.

What is copyright?

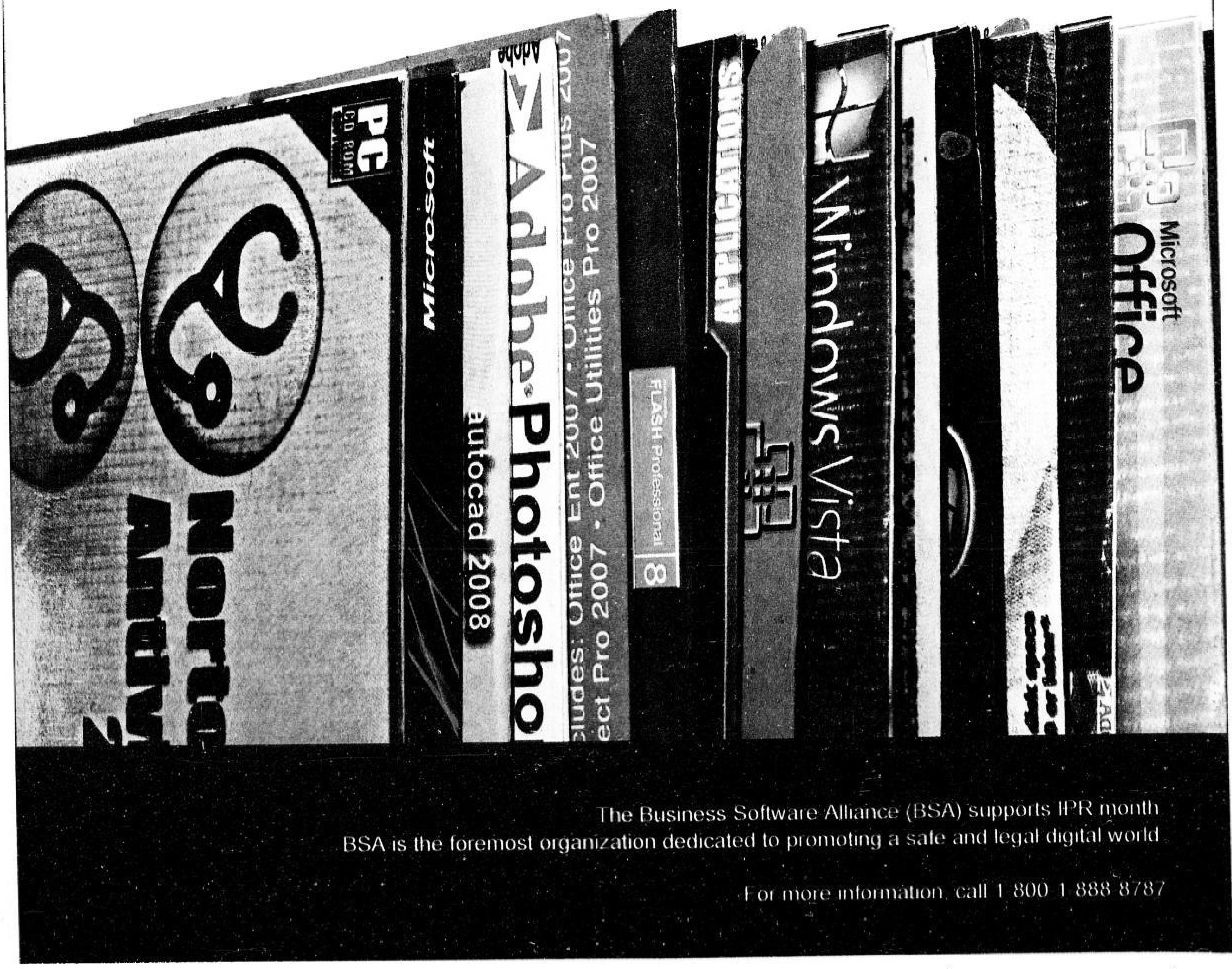
Copyright subsists from the moment the work is created. The domain of copyright extends to literary and artistic works including computer programs, multimedia work and databases.

What constitutes copyright violations?

If a person or entity illegally copies, reproduces, distributes or uses software programs without the copyright holder's permission.

What are the consequences for breaching the IP Code?

Offenders may be imprisoned for a maximum of nine years and fined up to P1,500,000.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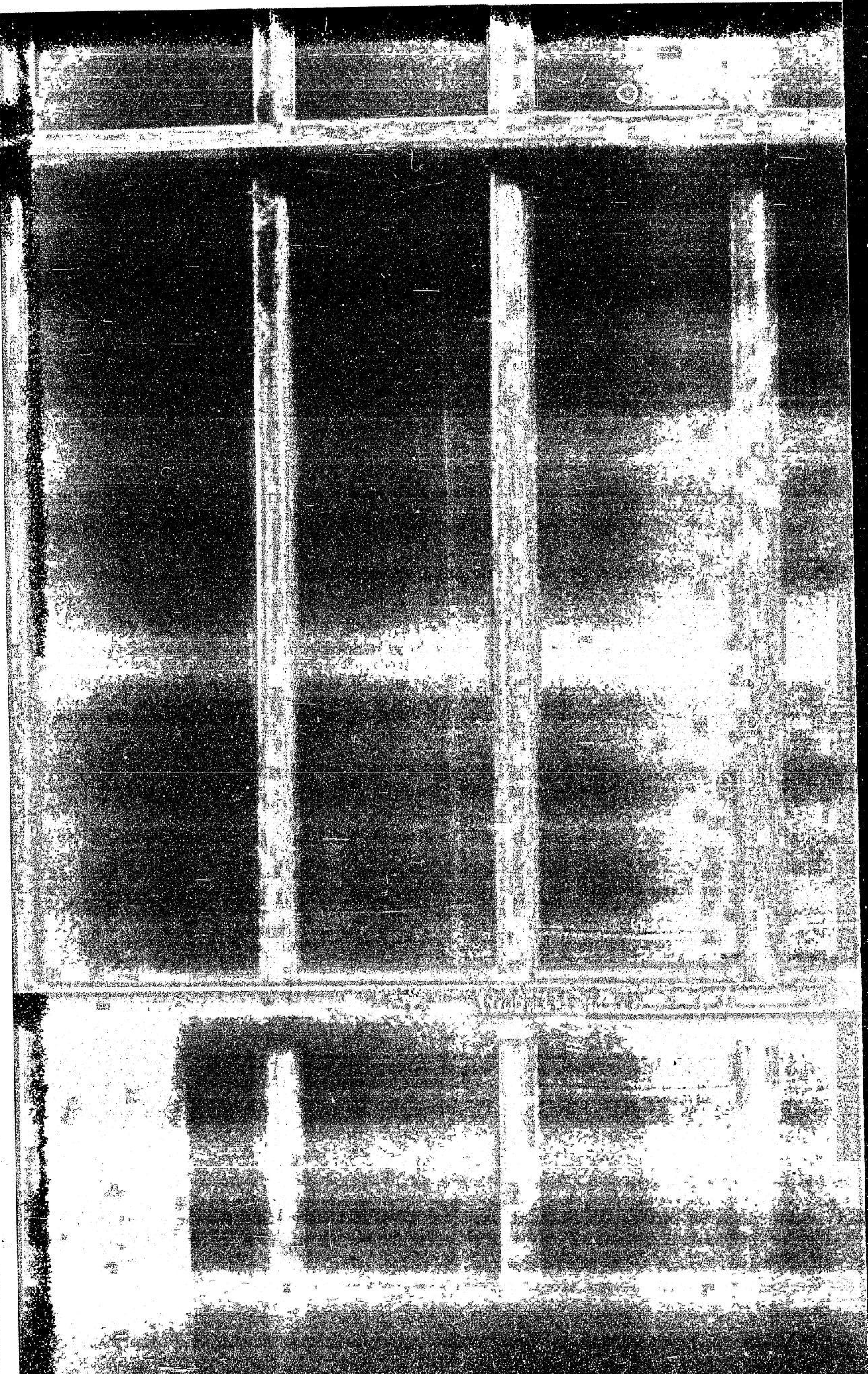
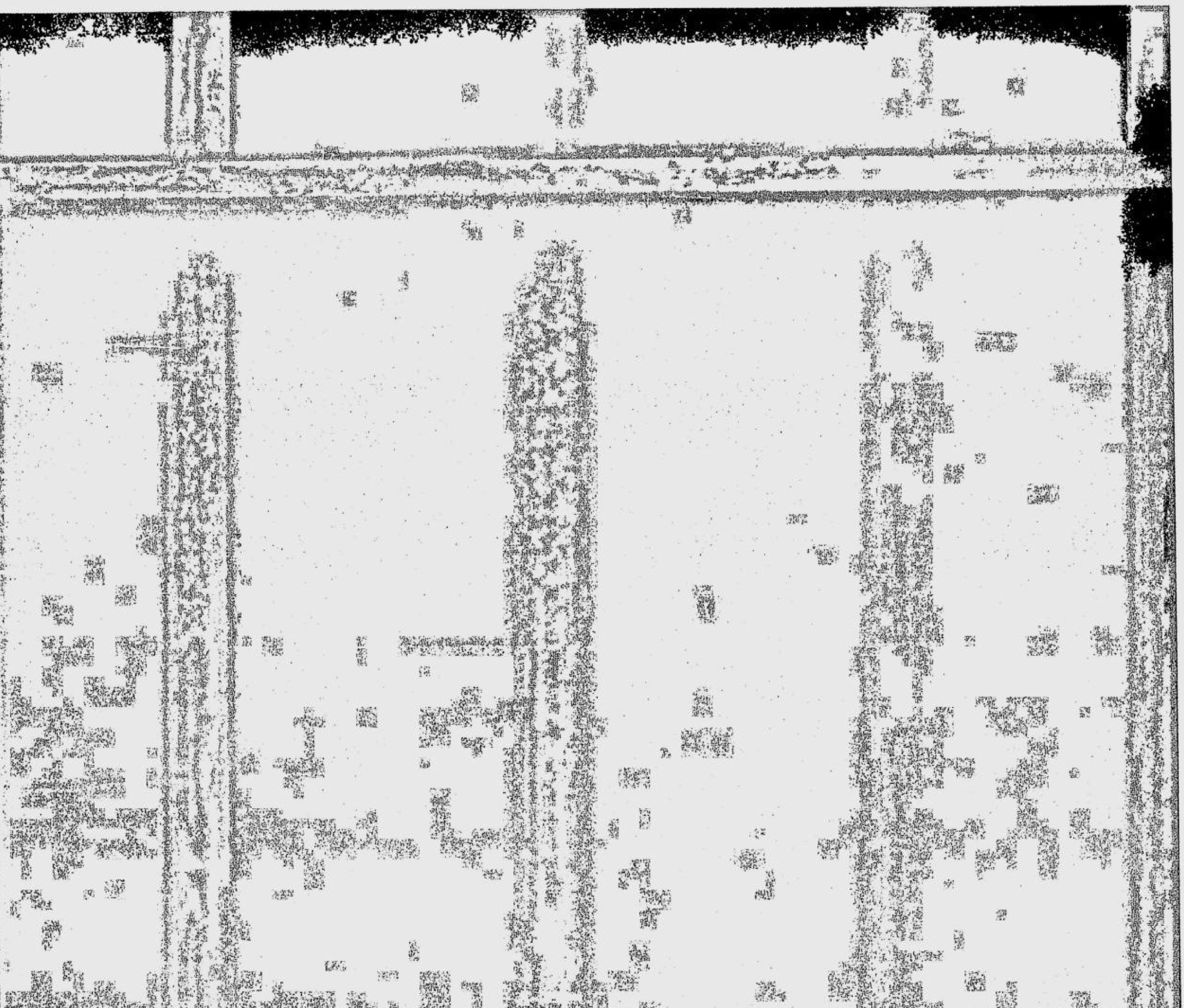



DITO KA MABUBULOK.
Lahat ng pirata ng software kulong. Pati ikaw.

Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team (PAPT) is the government-led organization composed of the Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Optical Media Board (OMB). PAPT sternly enforces the rule of law and makes sure all lawbreakers are reprimanded.
For more information, visit www.papt.org.ph

PILIPINAS
TEAM

The Optical Media Board (OMB) embarks on this campaign in support of the Intellectual Property Rights Month this October. The OMB is tasked to regulate the manufacture of optical media in all its forms and impose fines and penalties for its illegal reproduction.
For more information, visit www.omb.gov.ph

PIRACY DAYS ARE OVER, THE HUNT IS ON

PAPT arrests 8 people in software piracy raids

Wednesday, July 04, 2007

Manila, Philippines - Acting on the reports received through the website of the Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team (PAPT), agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group's Anti-Economic Crimes Task Force (CIDG-AECTF) of the Philippine National Police arrested 8 people during their raids against Internet cafes in Cebu and Davao.

The police raided Clickerz Internet café and Lafia Internet café in Davao City for alleged use of unlicensed software in the computers that they are renting to customers. John Radley Barrientos, owner of Clickerz, and Theophilus Ike Adimoha, owner of Lafia, were arrested during the raids conducted against their respective businesses. Giovanni Formentera, technician of Lafia was also arrested.

Police operatives were able to seize 26 computers from Clickerz and 60 from Lafia, all loaded with pirated software programs with an estimated value of almost 3.8 million pesos. Upon arrest, Adimoha was claiming that he was duped by Formentera and that he was not aware that the software installed in his computers was pirated. However, he refused to file charges against Formentera when asked by the police to do so.

Hours after the Davao raids, the CIDG-AECTF simultaneously raided three Internet cafes in Cebu, also for software piracy. Raided were Top One Internet café, SofTouch Internet café and Golden Circle Internet café, all located along Junquera Street in Cebu City. The police seized 38 computers from Top One, 27 from SofTouch and 15 from Golden Circle, all loaded with pirated software amounting to almost 2.8 million pesos. The couple Jed and Jocelyn Rafols, SofTouch owners, Raymond Soriano, Top One owner, Teodoro Bacalla, Top One shop attendant and Mark Ganate, Golden Circle shop attendant were arrested for questioning.

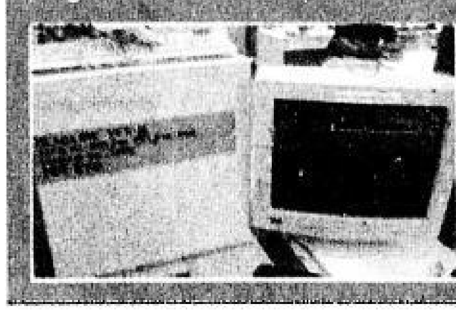
"These people that we arrested are suspected of violating the IP Code of the Philippines. Software piracy is a crime and as enforcers of the law, we are determined to arrest people who use pirated software in their business," said PSSupt. Noel delos Reyes, Executive Officer and spokesperson of the CIDG-AECTF.

Software piracy is a crime and as enforcers of the law, we are determined to arrest people who use pirated software in their business

NBI raids user of pirated software in Cavite Economic Zone

Tuesday, April 03, 2007

Manila, Philippines - The Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD) of the National Bureau of Investigation raided a Korean company located inside Cavite Economic Zone for suspected use of pirated software programs in its business.



The NBI acted on a complaint by the Business Software Alliance (BSA) on reports received through the BSA anti-piracy hotline that Headline I & C (Phils.), Inc. is allegedly using pirated software programs of Autodesk, Adobe and Microsoft. With a search warrant issued by the Honorable Mercedes Posada-Lacap, 2nd Vice-Executive Judge of Manila RTC Branch 15, the NBI seized 32 units of desktop computers and several compact disc installers containing unauthorized reproductions and unlicensed copies of Autodesk, Adobe and Microsoft software programs which amounted to almost Php 3.3 million.

PAPT STRENGTHENS ITS GRIP AGAINST SOFTWARE PIRACY

Anti-piracy team sweeps software pirates in the South

Friday, June 01, 2007

Cebu City, Philippines- The fight to eradicate software piracy remains challenging, but not impossible. This is the stand of the Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team (PAPT), a government-led initiative composed of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Optical Media Board (OMB) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) created to increase awareness and respect for intellectual property rights and promote the use of licensed software to foster growth of the Philippines local software industry.

The members of the PAPT conducted series of raids against business establishments in the South allegedly distributing and using unlicensed software. Operatives of the NBI - Intellectual Property Rights Division raided Cannon Creek Asia Inc. and Design Editions, both located in Mandaue City, Cebu. The raid resulted to the seizure of unlicensed software installers and 82 computers loaded with unlicensed software belonging to Adobe Corporation and Microsoft, Inc. amounting to PhP 9 million. The OMB raided optical media stalls in Cebu City including Goldisc Digital Multimedia, Marksman Superbit Shop and YFG Merchandising. The raid resulted to the seizure of 200 sacks of pirated software programs. On the other hand, the PNP-CIDG's Anti-Economic Crimes Task Force raided Clickers Café and Lafia Internet Café in Davao City and Top One Internet Café, Soft Touch Internet Café and Golden Circle Internet Café in Cebu City. The police were able to seize 86 computers in Davao and 80 computers in Cebu loaded with pirated software.

"We are adopting an all-out campaign against software piracy. Business establishments should realize that our activities are not just concentrated in Metro Manila. We are also actively doing enforcement actions in other key cities," said Atty. Jose Justo Yap, head of the NBI-Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD).

Since its launch in 2005, the PAPT has intensified its campaigns against IPR violation and has conducted simultaneous enforcement actions against businesses engaging in software piracy. For the first quarter of 2007, the PAPT has conducted numerous successful raids against business establishments that continue to use and distribute pirated software. The raids have already resulted in the confiscation of more than PhP 24 million worth of illegal software. Most of these raids were the results of reports received through the PAPT website.

The PAPT also recognizes that some companies might be unwitting victims of software piracy. The PAPT, through the initiative of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) of the Anti-Fraud and Commercial Crimes Division (AFCCD), has sent out letters to business establishments advising them to do an inventory of their software acquisition and usage to ensure legality of their software programs.

The PAPT has also made available the free service of the PAPT Technical Inspection Panel (P-TIP) which aims to assist companies in determining if the software programs that they are using are licensed or not

"The report may be unsubstantiated, but there is still that possibility that these businesses that were reported to the website may have indeed been a victim of software piracy without their knowledge. As such, the PAPT encourages companies to self-regulate and protect their businesses against the detrimental effects of using pirated software," said PSSupt. Noel O. Delos Reyes, head of the CIDG-AFCCD.

"Piracy has been a menace to our country. The government is determined to make the country piracy-free so that foreign investors will see the Philippines as an attractive destination for their business, without any fear that their products will be pirated, " said Edu Manzano, chairman of the OMB.

CIDG Raids Erring Internet Café

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

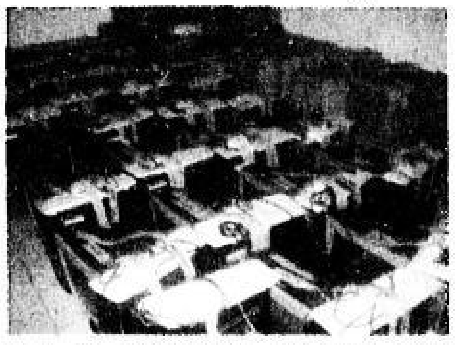
Cebu City, Philippines - Agents of the Anti-Fraud and Commercial Crimes Division (AFCCD) of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) swooped down on the Cyber Java Internet Café in Cebu City. Allegedly, the said internet café was engaged in the illegal and unauthorized reproduction, use and rental of software programs. The Manila-based law enforcers were backed-up by agents of the 7th Regional Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit under Police Senior Superintendent Jose Jorge E. Corpuz were not present when the raid was conducted.

During the raid on Cyber Java Internet Café, the police was also accompanied by a local representative of Microsoft for Visayas and Mindanao. The AFCCD requires the IP owner or its duly authorized representative to be present during the actual raid because the AFCCD usually makes arrests during such operations as part of its campaign to make IP violations a 'high risk' activity for perpetrators.

The offending internet cafe was located inside the SM City, Cebu. This was not the first time that the police targeted a business establishment inside an SM mall. Last year, AFCCD agents also conducted separate raids against stores selling and hard-loading pirated software at the SM North EDSA and SM Iloilo City.

Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team starts crackdown on users/ sellers of pirated software in Davao City

Wednesday, March 21, 2007



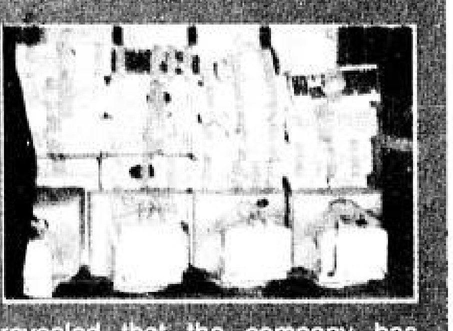
Davao City, Philippines - Continuing its fight against Intellectual Property (IP) piracy, a team from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group's Anti-Fraud and Commercial Crimes Division (CIDG-AFCCD) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) raided two users and a seller of illegal software in Davao City. The police conducted simultaneous raids against two Internet cafes and another raid on a computer store.

Raided were the BOYZTREK and SPA NET Internet Cafés for allegedly using unlicensed software. The TELETEXT Enterprises, on the other hand, was raided for allegedly selling pirated software. Police confiscated total of 136 computers and several optical discs containing pirated software as well as other computer peripherals estimated to be worth more than 4 million pesos. The raids were carried out on the strength of the search warrants issued by Executive Judge Reynaldo G. Ros of the Manila Regional Trial Court.

"We have been doing such raids against business establishments that are engaged in the use and/or sale of pirated software as a result of leads provided us through the Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team (PAPT) website. In fact. my field investigators are now in the process of verifying allegations that certain call centers and banks are not using licensed software", said Police Senior Superintendent Noel delos Reyes, head of the CIDG-AFCCD.

Call center raided by NBI for use of unlicensed software

Wednesday, May 02, 2007



Makati City, Philippines - A Korean company operating as a "call center" in Makati City was raided by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for allegedly using unlicensed business software programs.

Raided was Jigu Corporation/Widespace, located at 2/F & Unit 3-B, 3/F, D'Metyang's Building, 5064 P. Burgos St. corner Guanzon St., Makati City, after investigations revealed that the company has been using unlicensed copies of Microsoft Windows and Office.

NBI raids two companies in Cebu for software piracy Total of 82 computers seized

Wednesday, May 30, 2007

Cebu City - The National Bureau of Investigation raided two companies in Cebu City for alleged use of unlicensed software. Agents from the Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD) of the NBI raided Cannon Creek Inc., an outsourcing company that prepares right ups for companies through internet research and Design Editions International Inc. which manufactures and designs furniture.

After thorough investigation, the NBI-IPRD was able to gather enough evidence confirming the allegation and secure search warrants from Judge Marino dela Cruz of Manila RTC Branch 22. NBI-IPRD agents flew directly from Manila to serve the search warrant to Cannon Creek Inc. located at E.S. Fortuna St., Mandaue City and Design Editions International Inc. at A.C. Cortez St., Mandaue City.

A total of 82 computers operating with unlicensed software belonging to Adobe Corporation and Microsoft, Inc. amounting to 9 million pesos were seized from the alleged infringing companies, 70 of which were seized from Cannon Creek Inc. while 12 were from Design Editions International Inc.

Articles sourced from www.papt.org.ph

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Filinvest also developed innovative communities like the Asenso Village which are intended for budding entrepreneurs. Now they have the convenience of having a home and business under one roof.

The company also expanded its market reach by tapping high growth regional centers. There is an ongoing expansion at North Luzon with the development of Somerset Lane in Tarlac and Hampton Orchards and Claremont in Pampanga as well as West Palms in Puerto Princesa.

Aside from communities, Filinvest has developed township developments like Filinvest East County, Ciudad de Calamba and Timberland Heights where schools, hospitals, business establishments are just a stone throw away from their homes.

Filinvest has also raised the bar for leisure lifestyles with residential resort communities like Laeuna de Taal, Seascapes Resort Town in Mactan, Cebu and Kembali Coast in Samal Island, Davao. High standards of living deserve world-class homes like the premier Brentville International, home of Brent International School.

Classiques at Brentville International, Mamplasan, Laguna

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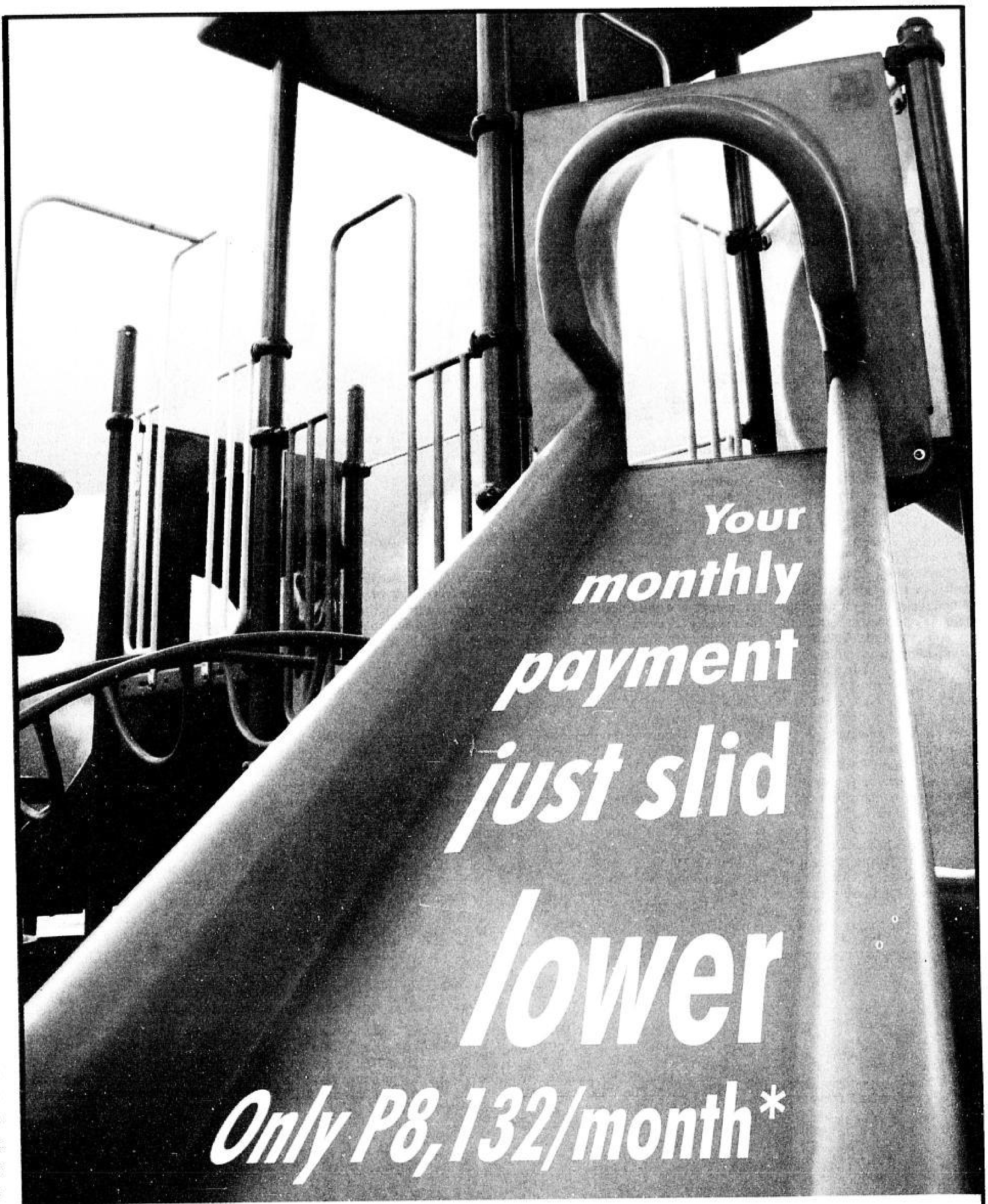

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Inquirer's INQuest Adventure strikes gold

CHARACTER Quest auditions held at various malls and schools.

WHO KNEW THAT A REVOLUTIONARY idea launched by one of the oldest forms of mass media—the newspaper—would be awarded for its creative use of the most modern of today's media, the Internet and mobile phone?

The Philippine Daily Inquirer's most ambitious marketing program "INQuest: The Philippine Daily Inquirer Adventure," was recognized for just that, as it was given the highest honor in the first-ever Boomerang Awards 2007 by the Internet and Mobile Marketing Association of the Philippines (IMMAP).

The INQuest Adventure, the first of its kind in the Philippines, is a murder-mystery multimedia game which bested other entries for the Gold Grand Boomerang Award, given to the Internet and mobile marketing campaign that most strategically utilized the Web, SMS/MMS along with other digital media.

A creative collaboration between the INQUIRER's marketing group and Euro RSCG 4D, the INQuest Adventure was also shortlisted as one of the Euro RSCG global network's 12 best in the world coming from over 1,500 entries in a network-wide search for the most creative business ideas executed using innovative high-level creative thinking.

The marketing challenge was to revive the interest of young readers who now prefer mobile technology and the Internet as their sources of news and information by transforming a perceived passive medium like print into a more engaging and interactive experience.

Taking over a year to develop, the INQuest Adventure was inspired by the popularity of adventure/mystery/reality shows like "The Amazing Race," "CSI" and "24" among the target market, combined with a plot that touched on the youth's inquisitive nature, and communicated through a multimedia platform—integrating the use of TV, cinema, print, radio, on-ground activities, SMS/MMS, interactive/website, online and outdoor media into a high impact campaign.

The INQuest Adventure was a fictional mystery series of a man's murder, told through the pages of the INQUIRER—wherein the investigator was the reader himself.

The object of the game was for "INQuestors" to follow the story and play detective, helping solve the mystery by looking for clues disguised as news and feature articles scattered in the different sections of the INQUIRER, then subsequently answering the question at the end of each chapter.

Correct answers sent through SMS gave participants chances to win digital gadgets and let them earn rewards points to be redeemed for premium items. On top of all these, identifying the murderer gave participants a shot at winning P100,000 in the grand draw.

The INQuest Adventure provided a channel for the INQUIRER to understand and learn more about the youth and in turn, use such information in the development of future projects that would cater to this eclectic target market.

By the end of its four-month run, over 25,000 game registrants became part of the INQUIRER's active database, exceeding targets by over 25 percent. The game's website www.inquestor.com generated over 4.2 million hits and was averaging 19,000 hits per day at 18 minutes per visit, including hardcore participants who actively joined in the online chats and forums.

Likewise, on-ground activities such as parties and mock police briefings attracted big crowds and drew interest from over 100,000 people.

Ultimately, the INQuest Adventure was able to effectively connect and capture the youth market and at the same time, allowed the INQUIRER to evolve into a more contemporary, progressive and relevant news brand.

Euro RSCG Manila managing director and chief creative officer Norman Agatep, his creative team comprised of art director Beth Luna and senior copywriter Cathleen Giongco, as well as accounts servicing director Agnes Dioso and business unit head Bambie Paguia were on hand to receive the award during the Boomerang Awards ceremony held at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila.

According to IMMAP, every entry was closely evaluated by an international panel of judges comprised of prominent and credible marketing experts and new media specialists from the United States, Australia, China, Singapore and the Philippines.

Boomerang Awards juror Rob Martin Murphy, who is the executive creative director of The Furnace Australia and many-time recipient and juror of such prestigious international awards as Cannes, Clio, One Show and London International, and one of the key speakers during the Boomerang awards night, congratulated the INQUIRER and Euro RSCG 4D for promoting a classic whodunit albeit with a local flavor.

Other top winners of the event were the Department of Tourism (DOT) "The Philippines: Explore. Experience. Return." (PEER) Free Flight Promo which won the Gold Cyber Boomerang Award and is also a project spearheaded by Euro RSCG 4D in partnership with DOT, and Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines Inc. "Gatorade Get Into the NBA" Promo 2 which received the Gold Mobile Device Boomerang Award.

The IMMAP Boomerang Awards is the first in the country to showcase and give recognition to outstanding marketing campaigns that have utilized the Internet and mobile devices as central marketing tools—beyond the traditional media of print, television and radio—to meet business objectives in the most creative and breakthrough manner.

It was the highlight of the two-day Internet and Mobile Marketing Summit which brought together international and local industry figures and companies to discuss interconnection, integration and innovation in the world of Internet and mobile.

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Top world cardiac surgeon to give RP business a heart

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Evelyn R. Singson

HE REGARDS HIMSELF AS A cardiac surgeon in a heartless world. To nearly 20,000 of India's poorest whom he has touched and cured, he is god personified.

Much like his former patient, Mother Teresa, his mission is saintly: To save the world.

Bangalore-based Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, founder of Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Medical Sciences, is arriving in Manila this week to share the secrets to his success in combining medicine and technology in one of the poorest places on Earth: India.

The British-trained cardiologist is one of 13 world-renowned business leaders and visionaries speaking at the 6th Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) International CEO Conference at the Makati Shangri-La this October 2-3.

This will be a rare occasion for Filipino medical practitioners to learn valuable lessons from Dr. Shetty's experience in making healthcare available to the masses.

Dr. Shetty and his team at the Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute have been saving the lives of thousands of heart patients in India—almost half of whom are children and babies—who get mostly free or subsidized treatment, regardless of economic status or geographic location.

The mechanics of heart surgery, Dr. Shetty believes, are easy—it's the cost that kills.

Every year, two-and-a-half million Indians need to undergo a heart operation. They are three times more genetically prone to heart diseases than Australians, Americans or Europeans. Yet few can afford even basic healthcare, let alone heart surgery.

Currently, those who undergo the operation make up less than half of a percent of those diagnosed. Dr. Shetty's solution is simple yet bold: Bring the mountain to Mohammed.

His Narayana Hrudayalaya Hospital set up a network of coronary care units in remote government hospitals around India.

These are all video-linked via satellite to the hospital in Bangalore—allowing him to consult patients in far-flung rural areas who otherwise would never have access to specialist medical advice.

"The beauty of telemedicine is that it makes ordinary doctors do extraordinary things," Dr. Shetty said in an interview with an Indian daily.

Many of his grateful patients from India's lower castes have deified Dr. Shetty as a result. He has also launched a health insurance program that benefits two million farmers. Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship in India named him "Social Entrepreneur of the Year" for his exemplary contribution to giving the poorest of Indians access to quality healthcare.

"Winning the award will help us to get recognition internationally. It will help us in setting up a chain of heart hospitals in Asia and Africa," the heart doctor said.

For Dr. Shetty, a perfect India would be the day when every person is carrying a smart card that gives him/her access to hi-tech healthcare in any part of the world with dignity, writes Financial Express of India.

(Those interested to see and hear Dr. Shetty and other top business leaders and visionaries shaping today's global business may register online for the 6th MAP International CEO Conference at www.mapceo-conference.com or call the MAP Secretariat at telephone numbers (632) 751-1149.)

LIFEST
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
Website
Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart)

IN THIS ISSUE
▨ Metrobank design winners bared /D5
▨ Comprehensive book on saga of La Naval /E1

Spanish film fiesta unreels this week

October 1 - 14, 2007
Greenbelt 3, Cinema 2
Película
Pelikula
6th Spanish Film Festival
Instituto Cervantes Manila

Pelicula/Pelikula, the biggest showcase of Spanish and Latin American films in Southeast Asia, opens Oct. 2

PELICULA/Pelikula, a festival of Spanish and Latin American films organized by Instituto Cervantes de Manila, presents a selection of Spanish films this month.

Now on its sixth year, it will run Oct. 2-14 at Cinema 2 of Greenbelt 3.

Twenty-one full-length features will showcase the best of Spanish cinema.

"With Pelicula, we bring this year an extraordinary selection of Spanish and Latin American movies," said Instituto Cervantes director José Ma. Rodriguez.

"From the latest films of contemporary directors, to old classics and short documentaries, Pelicula turns into a must-see event in the cultural life of Manila."

The festival will begin with films from new directors. One is Daniel Sanchez Arévalo's *opera prima*, the highly successful "Azulo Oscuro, Casi Negro."

Other films that will also be screened are the latest from second-time directors Alberto Rodriguez ("7 Viírgenes"); Benito Zambrano ("Habana Blue"); and Jorge Sánchez-Cabezudo ("La Noche de los Girasoles"); as well as the third of Eduard Córtes ("Otros Dias Vendrán").

There will also be the latest works from directors that tackle broad themes such as José Luis Cuerda, who will present his " La Educación de las Hadas," and Fernando Colomo's latest, "El Próximo Oriente."

The sixth edition of Pelikula will be graced by director Maria Ripoll, who will present the best of her works, from her first film "Lluvia en los Zapatos," to her most recent, "Tu Vida en 65,'" including "Utopia" or "Tortilla Soup."

Also part of the festival are films from two of Spain's more internationally renowned directors: "La Vida Secreta de las Palabaras" by Isabel Coixet, and "Semen, Una Historia de Amor" by Inés Paris.

Classics

This sixth edition of the festival will open with the concert "Universo Chomón," in which

SPANISH/ C3

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Exec. Sec., Pres. Gloria Macapagal
DR. NILO ROSAS
Educator. Former President Phil. Normal University
MEL VELARDE
CEO, Nextel
VILMA SANTOS
Gov., Batangas, Actress
BERNADETTE SEMBRANO
Broadcast Journalist
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REVIEWS

What price love?

By Alice M. Sun-Cua
Contributor

"La Educacion de las Hadas" (The Education of Fairies)
Director: José Luis Cuerda
2007

WHAT WOULD YOU do for love? The answer it seems, in this Cuerda offering, is "Everything. Everything!"

Nicolás (Ricardo Darín), a 40-year-old toy-maker who encounters the love of his life, Ingrid (Iréne Jacob), a recently-widowed beautiful woman, and her 8-year-old son Raúl (Victor Valdivía), on a flight from Alicante to Barcelona. They set up home in the lush woodlands of Nicolás' ancestral house in Catalán where Ingrid, an ornithologist, builds her own glass house for her scientific studies.

Raúl is a boy whose heart and head is filled with enchantment, needing a father after his biological one, a decorated aviator hero, died in Iraq. Every evening, Nicolás fills Raúl with fairy stories to put him to sleep, even showing the boy his secret hideaway, a wooden barn deep in the leafy forest, with enchanted places to hide old photos and memories.

One day, however, Ingrid suddenly acts very strangely, refuses to sleep with Nicolás, and tells him they have to part. Nicolás despairs. Where did he fail? Is there another man? Every male visitor to the house now becomes suspect.

At this point he meets Sezar (Bebe), a young Algerian woman of Iraqi descent who is preparing to finish her doctoral studies at the Sorbonne. She works at the checkout counter of a supermarket, and is sexually harassed by the manager, and at the same time abandoned by her boyfriend who is in prison after a drug bust.

Sezar is now transformed into a most unlikely character of a fairy in the forest for Raúl to discover, as the boy clothes her in his magic imaginings.

Meanwhile, Nicolás struggles with his torment, but ready to give up Ingrid, if this will make her happy.

The encounter between Ingrid and Sezar finally makes us understand why things turn out the way they do; why decisions, sometimes as startling and painful as the one Ingrid takes, must be made; and how, faced with all these, love continues to flourish, and remains as unchangingly beautiful and fresh as the forest surrounding their home.

The strength of the film comes from the rich but fine intertwining stories of the characters' lives, a tightly paced unfolding of scenes without sacrificing the little details that make the movie unique and memorable: the toy owl Nicolás made, hanging in Ingrid's glass house; his dialogue with Luisa (Gloría Roig), the woman who has been with his family for three generations and whom he professed his love for Ingrid; the quiet bonding between Nicolás, the "natural father," and the boy Raúl; and the despondence of Ingrid in front of the mirror as the bitter truth faced her.

The contrast of the clear glass house where Ingrid works at daytime and the dark night when Nicolás has to sleep away from her; the openness of their relationship at the beginning, and its rigidity when the shadows start to overwhelm, builds up a tension that reaches its culmination when Sezar enters the scene in a manner so ingenuous there is no difficulty in suspending disbelief.

Those who love the countryside will revel in the visually stunning terrain, a perfect backdrop to this movie based on the novel with the same title by Van Cauwelaert.

Whether this story is told from the point of view of Nicolás, or Ingrid, or Sezar, or even Raúl, they will agree on the theme: Love is all. And that if one's love is true, everything can be sacrificed for the beloved.

Alice M. Sun-Cua, a poet and a physician. Her books include "Riding Towards the Sunrise & Other Travel Essays" (Anvil, 2000) and "Charted Prophesies and Other Poems" (DLSU Press, 2001).

Argentinean Antoine Doinel

By Vicente Garcia Groyon
Contributor

"Derecho de Familia (Family Law)"
Director: Daniel Burman
2006

DERECHO DE FAMILIA" immediately establishes a languid, deliberate pace and maintains it for the rest of the movie. Fans of Hollywood storytelling style may be confounded by the meandering rhythms of this gem of a film from Argentina, but the patient will be rewarded.

Ariel Perelman (Daniel Hendler) teaches law at university and works as a civil servant, quietly resisting becoming his father (Arturo Goetz, in a warm, restrained performance), who is a popular and successful defense attorney. The tension between destiny and Ariel's passive-aggressive approach to decision-making provides the forward momentum of the story.

Soon after the movie begins, Ariel woos Sandra, one of his more fetching students (Julieta Diaz), with some professional help from his father, in a charming subplot involving Pilates, copyright law, and tissue paper. They marry and soon have an adorable toddler, Gaston (Eloy Burman, a scene-stealer and the director's child), whose care and upbringing Ariel seems ambivalent about, although it's clear he adores his son.

Director-screenwriter Daniel Burman tells the story with the logic and compassion of Francois Truffaut, an acknowledged influence. Derecho recalls the later Antoine Doinel movies, with their quiet, gently humorous vignettes and loose plots held together by the magnetic presence of the protagonist. Daniel Hendler sets the tone here with his befuddled, almost willfully vacant face and deadpan line readings.

On one level, Derecho de Familia is about the roles that young men must play as they mature and take their place in society. Ariel is unable to reconcile his sense of self with these roles, and continues to behave like a confused adolescent even after he becomes a husband and father. He is unable to deal with his jealousy over his wife's hunkier Pilates students, and unwilling to help raise Gaston. When an office renovation gives him a month-long vacation, he puts off telling his wife, preferring to "play hooky" for no reason.

Ariel is a man who has resisted growing up, dreading the inevitable moment when he will see his father staring back at him from a mirror. The law is his profession, yet he carefully draws a line between the law (his father's practice) and justice (his vocation). Many of his lectures focus on the gray areas in the interpretation of the law, alluding to his own refusal to recognize the blacks and whites life presents us with.

Ultimately, Derecho is about the complexity of fatherhood and how it's inextricably tied up with son-hood. The film completes a series exploring this topic ("Esperando al Mesías" in 2000 and "El Abrazo Partido" in 2004, all starring Hendler as a character named Ariel). In this conclusion, Burman suggests that the fruit can never fall far from the tree, but finds comfort and salvation in this proposition.

Vicente García Groyon is a novelist who teaches Film and Literature at De La Salle University. His short stories are collected in the book, "On Cursed Ground and Other Stories" (UP Press, 2004).

Instituto Cervantes

Película Película. 6th Spanish Film Festival
October 2 to 14, 2007
Greenbelt 3, Cinema 2 (except for screenings on 9 Oct, which will be held in Cinema 1)

Date/Time	1 pm	4:30 pm	7:00 pm	9:30 pm	12:00
2 Tue		Invisibles	Tu vida en 65'	Utopía	
3 Wed		Iluminados por el fuego	Azul oscuro casi negro	[illegible]	
4 Thu		7 vírgenes	La educación de las hadas	Semen, una hª de amor	
5 Fri		Viva Cuba	El aura	El próximo Oriente	Habana Blues
6 Sat	El sueño de una noche de San Juan	Tu vida en 65'	Ciudad en celo	Azul oscuro casi negro	Otros días vendrán
7 Sun	De profundis	Derecho de familia	El aura	Semen, una hª de amor	
8 Mon		La noche de los girasoles	Los últimos de Filipinas	Ciudad en celo	
9 Tue	(Screenings in Cinema 1)	Viva Cuba	Habana Blues	Salvador	
10 Wed		La educación de las hadas	Iluminados por el fuego	El próximo Oriente	
11 Thu		7 vírgenes	Derecho de familia	Otros días vendrán	
12 Fri		Ciudad en celo	Viva Cuba	La noche de los girasoles	Azul oscuro casi negro
13 Sat	De profundis	El aura	El próximo Oriente	[illegible]	Tu vida en 65'
14 Sun	Derecho de familia	Semen, una hª de amor	[illegible]	Salvador	

For further information please logo on to www.manila.cervantes.es

Love, death and tango

By Dinah Roma
Contributor

"Ciudad en Celo" (City in Heat)
Director: Hernan Gaffet
2006

WHEN SERGIO (Daniel Kuzniecka) comes home earlier than usual and finds his wife in bed with his younger brother in "Ciudad en Celo," I prepare myself for another run-of-the-mill love triangle.

But when Sergio's mother suddenly calls right in the middle of the family tussle to ask if he had a row with his brother who has been acting strange lately, I knew that the story promises to be a bit more complicated and funny.

"Ciudad en Celo" (2006) brings us to Buenos Aires, the tango capital of the world, where one finds love and beautiful women almost on every corner of the street. Director Hernan Gaffet's debut work scales down this passionate city to a small, unassuming cafe called Garllington, where a group of near middle-aged friends gathers. Sergio, Marcos (Adrian Navarro) and Valeria (Dolores Sola) are brought together once more after Sebastian (Juan Minujin), the urbanite in the group, calls to invite them to a reunion in their old hangout.

On the night they promised to meet, Sebastian commits suicide.

As the three friends grieve, old heartaches and disappointments are revealed and their friendship affirmed. In confronting their individual losses, Valeria, a powerful tango vocalist, finally comes to accept her unchanging love for Sergio. On the other hand, Marco, though a rival for Valeria's affection, decides instead to shake Sergio to action. Finally freed of his desire, Marco now pursues a younger interest whom he met earlier in a cemetery. Even the cafe's owner, the cool and debonair, Duke (Claudio Rissi), does not remain bereft of love. He becomes the chivalrous knight to a melancholic lady.

Through these affairs, everyone finds the comfort and warmth that lift the banality of everyday life to a more exciting and thus bearable height. Not even the mad woman Juana (Julia Calvo) that Sergio befriends in the cafe and whose spontaneity had once charmed a flower vendor to his death is without her great yet tragic love story.

The controlled and even performance of the actors renders the love stories credible. Nothing goes out of hand. Not even the ritual of the three friends to bid their friend Sebastian farewell by throwing his ashes into a lake is spared a comic touch when the ducklings thought they were being fed breadcrumbs.

Indeed, this is not a young person's love story. Yet, all the more, each character is made more brave, humorous and appreciative of love, which as we age may no longer be as simple and easy as we wish it to be.

The film's enchanting soundtrack lends rhythm to the narrative. The tango music, with its sultry crescendos and sad descent, is after all what love is all about. No one escapes it. No one has the power to resist it. The film's ending says it all—heed the music and love will just be a dance away.

Dinah Roma is a poet and teacher.

Any normal Sunday

By Shirley O. Lua
Contributor

"Tu Vida en 65' (Your Life at 65)"
Director: Maria Ripoll
2006

ONE SUNDAY, AS ANY regular Sunday would be to young men in the summer of Barcelona, three friends meet, their day already mapped out: lunch, frolic in the beach, and watch soccer. Chancing upon the obituaries, they note the death of a schoolmate. On a spur of the moment, they grace the funeral, realizing soon after that the deceased is someone they do not know. This sets off a string of encounters, nothing like their usual Sunday lark.

Such is the engaging premise of the film "Tu Vida en 65'" (Spain, 2006; English title: "Your Life at 65'") directed by María Ripoll. The film begins with an arresting scene: Dani Martí, one of the three amigos, sits before a washing machine, gazing at it with pleasure. He finds serenity in watching his shirts spinning and swirling in the soapy water. This scene forebodes the singularity of the succeeding incidents, building up to a disquieting ending.

Just in case the viewer expects this to be one of those surrealist or postmodern ventures, s/he is due for a chance disappointment. The film turns out to be ingeniously simple, in terms of plot, but mind-blowing complex, in terms of the issues it raises.

Scripted by Albert Espinosa based on his play, the story presents dichotomies of the quotidian such as: the normal vs. the strange, premeditated vs. coincidental, mischance vs. opportunity. It questions the socially constructed notion of death, and how people attempt to cope with it. In real life, death is often treated as something unexpected, an unwelcome intrusion into the mundanity of the everyday. Ironically, normal is when you order paella and it takes forever to arrive, while death, the coincidental, happens in a wink of an eye. Thus, after a funeral, one goes shopping in the mall to recapture the sense of normality. But as one character remarks, "everyone will die," recognizing the most obvious common event of human history.

And is falling in love an aberration?

The three amigos, seeing the day spiraling out of their control, endeavor to regain the typicality of a Sunday, wherein, according to one of them, "we feel confident."

The film's winning moments lie in the juxtaposition of the perceived normal and the unusual, in the shifting from the expected to the unexpected. This incongruity lends humorous and ironic twists to the unhurried pacing of action.

The dialogue is simply brilliant. During the wake, one

ANY/ C3

Eavesdropping on silences

By Marjorie Evasco
Contributor

"La Vida Secreta de las Palabras"
Director: Isabel Coixet
2005

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN life throws your way an unexpected, even an unwished-for bonanza, like a forced monthlong vacation with pay, away from the tediousness of work? Most of us would readily pack up and leave for some fantasy island, and for once, go on an adventure or give in to the luxury of just letting be.

But our hero Hanna Amiran (Sarah Polley) is not like most of us, even if on the surface she seems like everyone else in the drab factory uniform. A solitary, she lives in a world of no-sound, enclosed in a silence so deep, words hardly spill out of her even in the presence of others.

However, she does live with words in her mind, and through the film's way of dramatizing internal speech, we eavesdrop on her secret life and unravel the mystery of who she is and why she is trying to forget her past.

This world that we overhear holds our attention, and when she decides on the spur of a moment to chuck off her vacation for a chance opportunity to work as a nurse to an oil-rig worker, Joseph Bryce (Tim Robbins), who had been fractured, badly burned and temporarily blinded in a fire, we sense her choice would irrevocably change her.

She is immediately whisked off to this oil rig, an artificial "island" in some cold spot in the vast ocean, and here she finds herself with the all-male crew, men who also have chosen to live in isolation or in minimal contact with others; men who wanted to be left alone.

Like her, they have their secret lives and fears, their longings protected by aloneness and silence. There's Dmitri, in charge of the oil rig, who says he needs the ocean; on dry land he gets dizzy. There's Simon, the cook, who tends to his herbs and tries to cook gourmet dishes to ward off boredom.

Another is Martin, the oceanographer who measures the impact of waves and the effect of oil-drilling operations on mussels. Scott and Liam are away from their families and seek love from each other. Abdul dances away his blues. And, of course, there's Lisa the goose that honks at everyone.

Hanna's silence begins to break only when she unwittingly eavesdrops on her burn patient's secret life. And as Joseph insists on talking with her through his temporary blindness and burns, he builds with words an ineffable link with her inner life, a fragile bridge constructed out of bits of truth and lies; loves hoped for and forever lost; dreams and stories told with refreshing humor or stinging irony.

His words are also his way of sensing who she is, of bypassing the tyranny of the eye to give full sway to the sensitive and listening ear.

How she finally meets him on this bridge of words, when her chosen and characteristic reticence gives way to an ultimate telling of a terrifying story, is the film's central revelation of unnamable scars wrought by almost unimaginable human cruelties in the wars of the world.

Hanna's scars go all the way to Dubrovnik and the war in the Balkans. Her decision to trust and reveal her story silences Joseph into an understanding of an individual person's pain far gone too deep.

The Spanish say that to make something beautiful out of the terrible is to put the finger into the wound. *Poner el dedo en la llaga*.

This is where it is possible to eavesdrop on the secret life of an Other and understand what it takes to love. Director Isabel Coixet invites us to the heart of this art; one that does not configure easy solutions to the variable equations of pain and endurance.

"La Vida Secreta de las Palabras" won major awards for the cinema: Goya Best Director, Best Film and Best Screenplay prizes in 2006; Lina Mangiacapre Award in the Venice Film Festival; Silver Ariel Best Latin American Film in 2007.

Any normal . . .

From page C2

character shows appreciation for the creative design of the memoriam card, calling it "funerary chic." However, the award for the best line goes to the reply given to the question "How is he (the deceased)?" The reply: "He looks good."

In its simplicity, the film is a refreshing departure from the usual melodrama or wacky comedy. Hand-held moving shots project the film's look of the commonplace, alternating with occasional MTV-like sequences that underscore emotional tension or create turns in the plot.

Javier Pereira plays Dani Martí with wide-eyed candor and sensitivity. He is supported by an exceptional cast which includes Marc Rodríguez (Francisco) and Oriol Vila (Ignacio). Ripoll received a nomination for Best Director and Espinosa won for Best Screenplay in the Barcelona Film Award.

"Tu Vida en 65'" will be screened on Oct. 2, 6, and 13 at Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City. Ripoll will grace the Oct. 2 screening to introduce her film.

Shirley O. Lua teaches at De La Salle University in Manila and specializes in Philippine literature, diaspora studies, and film and literature.

Spanish film...

From page C1

INSTITUTO Cervantes de Manila director José Ma. Rodriguez

musician Jordi Sabatés will play an adaptation, with the piano, of accompaniment pieces for 15 of the films, expanding and renewing his poetic universe.

Segundo Chomón, the great pioneer of global cinema, created an infinite number of short-film animations and features under the studio of George Méliès and his own production house. His work opened doors for fictional cinema.

As part of historic film retrieval, "Los Ultimos de Filipinas," a classic war film by Antonio Román in 1945, will also be shown. It tells of the heroic feat of the Spanish soldiers in the remote detachment of Baler, who resisted for one year after Spain lost control over the Philippines.

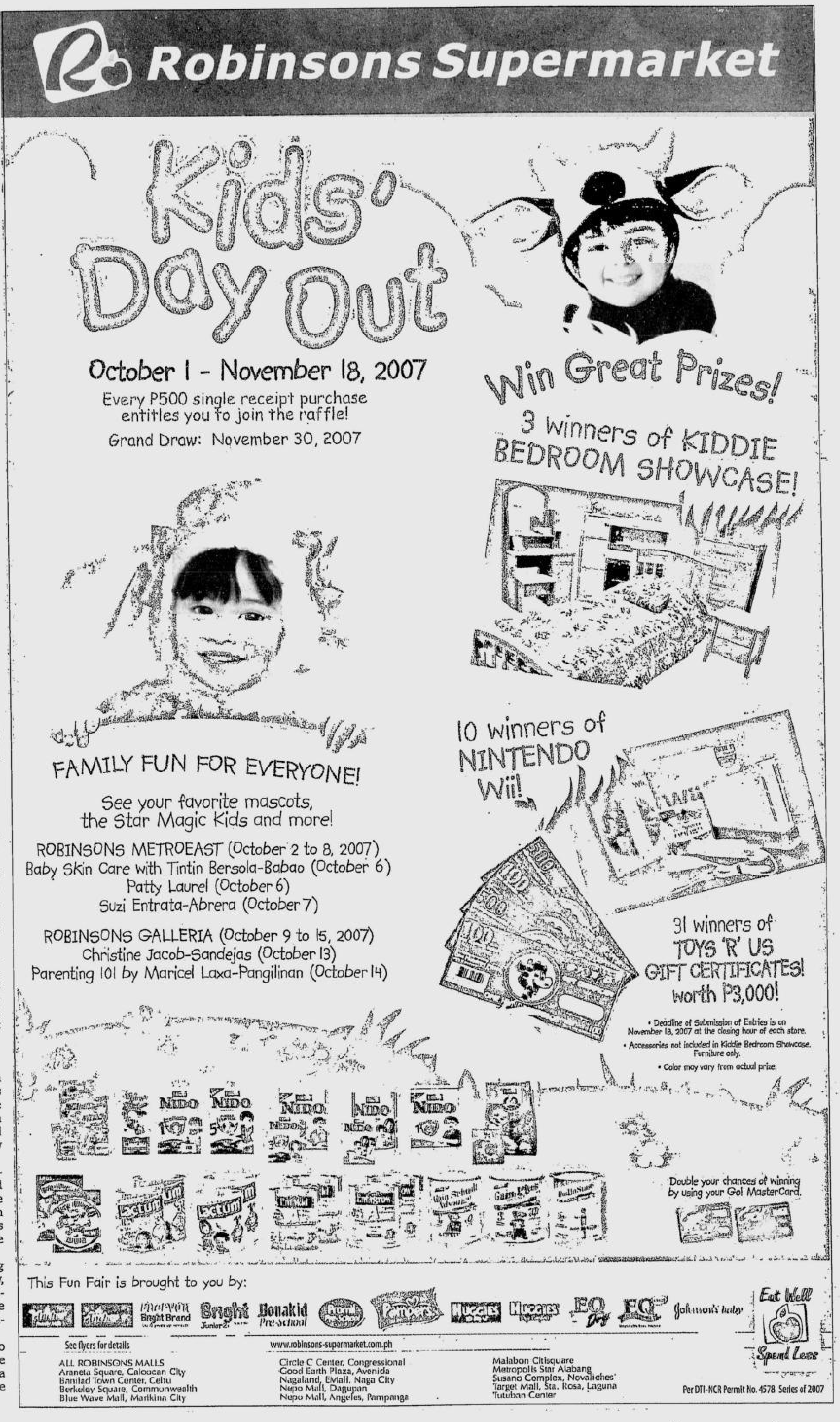
Rebirth of Spanish

The last edition of the festival was a tremendous hit among Manila moviegoers with over 14,000 people flocking to see the films. This success is yet another indication that the interest in Spanish language and culture has been on the rise the last few years.

Instituto Cervantes has seen a great increase in Spanish-language enrollment and enjoys large and receptive audiences in the cultural events it organizes. There has been a popular observation the Philippines is witnessing a rebirth of Spanish language and culture.

Rodriguez, a journalist known for having covered Philippine affairs for 25 years now, said he hoped that through Pelicula/Pelikula the historic cultural links between the Philippines and the Spanish global community would be deepened.

"My dream is for Instituto Cervantes to represent a way of life to every Filipino," he said, "a place for friendship and culture, a place for personal growth, and a place where there is room for everyone."



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Concert series to serenade the Madonna

JOSE MARI CHAN

JAMIE Rivera

Basil Valdez, Jamie Rivera, José Mari Chan, Raul Sunico and other musicians team up for 'Serenata,' the Novena concert series for La Naval de Manila

By Dexter R. Matilla
Contributor

FOR THIS YEAR'S Novena Masses for Our Lady of the Rosary, La Naval de Manila, a series of concerts will be held in connection with the centennial of the canonical coronation of the image.

Moreover, the recording of "Salamat, Maria," a special song composed for the centennial by top pop-music composer Vehnee Saturno and sung by Basil Valdez, will be launched.

BASIL Valdez

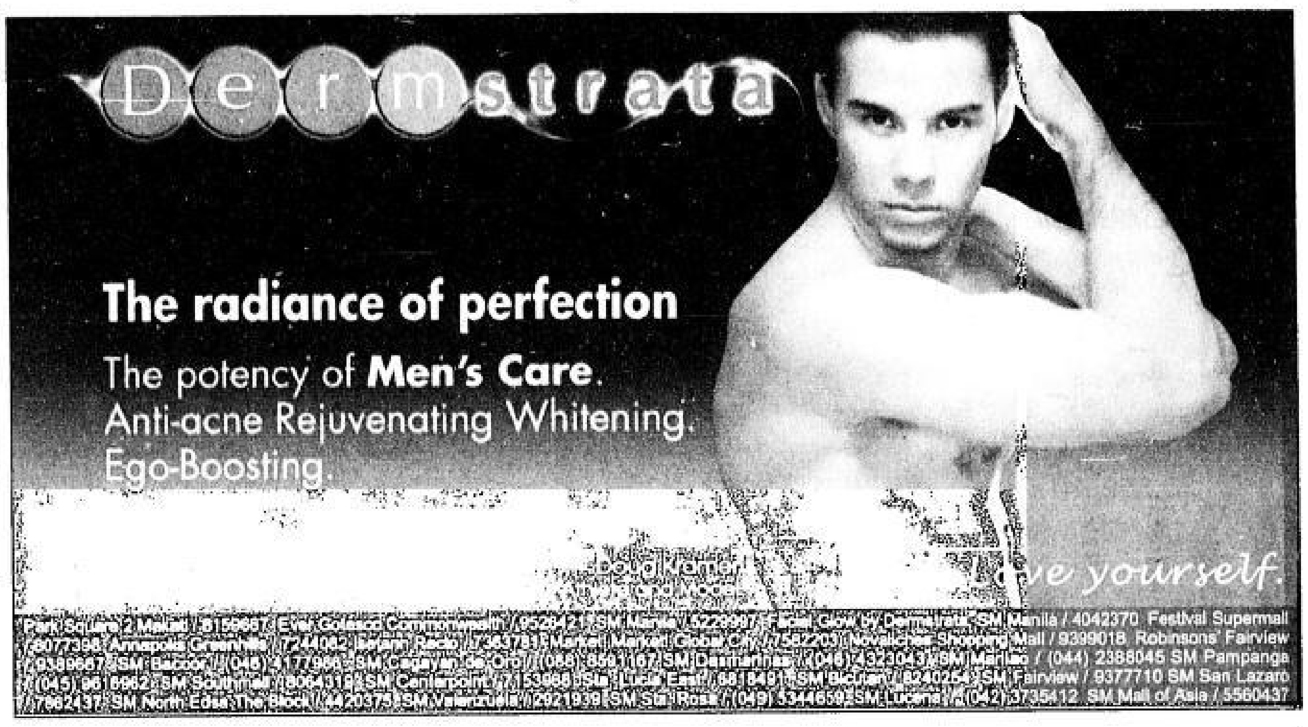
Perhaps no other victory in the history of the Filipino faith could be bigger than that of La Naval. The triumph of two Filipino-Spanish merchant galleons—the Encarnacion and the Rosario—over the Dutch's 18 warships in 1646 was a feat that seemed to exceed that of King Leonidas' 300 against Xerxes' Persian army.

The La Naval story tells of how the Dutch were planning to invade the Philippines, which had no naval force to withstand the probable.

On paper, it seemed like a lost cause, something Gen. Lorenzo de Orella y Ugalde realized. As highly skilled as he was, he knew a victory would be nothing short of a miracle.

Surrendering himself to God, he made a vow to Our Lady of the Rosary of Sto. Domingo Church in Intramuros that, if they were to overcome the odds, he and his "army" would walk barefoot toward the church.

CONCERT/ D3



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RACHEL Alejandro in "Avenue Q"

CAST of Atlantis Productions' "Avenue Q," directed by Bobby Garcia and Chari Arespacochaga: Alejandro, Rycharde Everly, Joel Trinidad, Felix Rivera, Aiza Seguerra, Teenee Chan and Frenchie Dy

Itchy puppets, greedy puppeteers

Three well-made musicals, two of them coming back for much-deserved reruns, offered good reasons for going to the theater recently

By Gibbs Cadiz

THERE WAS A time, before the onslaught of the TV-manufactured "Champions," when singer Rachel Alejandro's beautifully burnished alto dominated pop radio with hits like "Nakapagtataka" and "Paalam Na."

These days, the dominant sound of the airwaves is much higher in both decibel and pitch—the aural fingerprint of a crop of younger singers who've been taught that belting, curlicue and melisma, no matter how undisciplined or superfluous to their talent, are the turbo trains to popular acclaim.

Singing as a blood sport can howl non-belters like Alejandro out of the fickle spotlight, as it has of late.

But there is one venue where Alejandro should feel most welcome any time: the stage. Her few forays into musical theater so far ("Alikabok," "Larawan," "Rent") suggest that her gifts acquire greater luster when used in service to a musical character, as opposed to a conventional 32-bar pop ditty.

Her recent turn as Kate Monster and Lucy the Slut in Atlantis Productions' "Avenue Q," directed by Bobby Garcia and Chari Arespacochaga, supports this thought.

In this winsome staging of the 2004 Tony winner for Best Musical, which closed a weekend ago at the RCBC Theater but will be back in the same venue on December 14-23, Alejandro delivered a performance of remarkable control and versatility. Her pipes spun glittering sass one moment (in "Special"), precise heartbreak the next (in "There's a Fine, Fine Line").

Alejandro's assured presence in this genial, tuneful, sharply mischievous musical—featuring puppets that cussed and boinked each other, for starters—was all of a piece with her co-stars' joyously entertaining work.

Happy surprise

There's Felix Rivera, showing himself off as a newly minted leading man with his good looks, limber frame and strong, expressive voice (already evident when he strutted as an alternate Chuck Cranston in Stages' "Footloose" in 2005). If he keeps at it, Rivera should be in the big leagues by tomorrow.

Joel Trinidad juggled his multiple ventriloquist duties expertly, and was especially funny as Trekkie Monster. Aiza Seguerra, though you could quibble with her unsteady attempt at a black accent, was perfectly cast as Gary Coleman, if only for the resonant punch she brought to the line, "Try being a has-been at 15 years old!" And in small parts, Rycharde Everly and Teenee Chan gave deft support.

It would be an oversight not to devote a paragraph or two to Frenchie Dy, who was a happy surprise as Christmas Eve. The erstwhile "Star in a Million" champion aced her musical theater debut with much charm and confidence, plus the best voice in the ensemble next to Alejandro's.

She represents hope—the bona fide product of gladiatorial vocal combat on TV transcending her *birit* beginnings to become an effective storyteller in song. Can she dance? How about "Hairspray" for her next time?

("Avenue Q" returns Dec. 14-23 at the RCBC Theater. Call 8927078 or e-mail atlantis.productions@gmail.com).

Glossy 'sarsuwela'

Puppets and puppeteers were also on ample display in "Pilipinas Circa 1907," Tanghalang Pilipino's glossy, colorful restaging of Nicanor Tiongson's modern *sarsuwela* on the state of the nation a full century ago.

Unlike "Avenue Q's" denizens, the puppets here weren't of the cute, furry kind. Try grasping, brutal, sycophantic instead. Puppet and puppet-master took the form of local toadies and their American colonialist overlords who worked in tandem to rip the land of its resources, take over homegrown industries and harass anyone with pronounced nationalist sentiments.

Ripping a page off Severino Reyes' landmark *sarsuwela* "Walang Sugat," "Pilipinas Circa 1907," briskly directed by Dennis Marasigan, offered no pretensions to an unbiased view of history.

It had a knotty, playful love story—make that two love stories—at its center, but Tiongson's libretto thumbed the scales as a larger, full-throated screed against Western imperialism and its ballast, capitalist greed. It wasn't for nothing that in this *sarsuwela*, the pivotal Filipino tobacco company lusted over by the Americans was named Germinal—after the title of Emile Zola's novel on the oppressed working classes of the Industrial Revolution.

Zippy and agile

The revelation, then, of "Pilipinas Circa 1907," staged without the aid of lapel microphones at the CCP's Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino, was how light, zippy and musically agile it felt despite its ponderous themes.

The music—by José Estella, Lutgardo Labad, Louie Pascasio, Lucien Letaba and Chino Toledo, with snatches from Nicanor Abelardo, Scott Joplin and Barry Fagan—was by a virtual committee that promised only a muddled mess. But under Chino Toledo's musical ministrations, what came out was a robust score brimming with martial music, rich melodies and lofty arias.

Sung, it should be added, by some of the most attractive if largely unheralded voices theater company had been able to gather lately.

Miguel Castro, Ana Feleo (thrilling in her aria, "Ang Maya"), Lani Ligot, Jing Reyna, Mia Bolanos and Nazer Salcedo paced the rest of the cast with the refinement and transparency of their singing. The large ensemble, garbed in costumes by Danilo Franco, sounded warm and vigorous, if not always tight-knit—a forgivable kink when weighed against the lucidity and energy of the production.

Inquisitive kids

In the musical "Children's Letters to God," God, whomever or however we conceive Him to be, is the grand puppet-master jerking the cosmic strings behind everything that happens around us. Or is he?

That ambiguity, both tantalizing and exasperating, is not what the story is about, but it is a subtext worth acknowledging. For while five inquisitive children send God a fusillade of letters with amusing yet thought-provoking questions ("Dear God, are you really invisible or is that just a trick?") or pithy observations ("Dear God, I think the stapler is one of your greatest inventions"), the All-Knowing One remains silent, aloof, unresponsive.

In this Off-Broadway musical (music by David Evans, lyrics by Douglas J. Cohen) that Actor's Actors Inc.'s Bart Guingona (assisted by Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo) staged for one weekend last month and will bring back for two more weekends this October, the children are left on their own to explore, discover, learn from and live out the answers to their questions.

No voice from the heavens, no apparitions, no burning bush. Which, in the end, may constitute God's All-Purpose Answer to human confusion: I gave you everything you need, kiddo—free will, a mind and a heart. Use them, and good luck.

In "Children's Letters to God," the kids do. They discover their own capacity to overcome fear, reach out to others, accept new and strange realities (their parents' divorce, for instance, or the death of a pet), ride out the bumps of their fragile young lives.

Care and poise

And as performed by a thoroughly captivating cast that, on the afternoon we watched, included Julia Abueva, Aria Clemente, Vince Ching, Miguel Lorenzo Sison and Nacho Tambunting (there were two other sets of young actors alternating in the roles), the silly-serious world-view offered by this show became an enormously touching, transporting experience.

A musical about "God" rinsed of the contemporary default positions of irony, attitude and quotation marks can carry its own self-destructive gene: How far before it capsizes into mush?

Impressively, "Children's Letters to God" held on to great poise and the steadiest of care. Guingona and Lauchengco-Yulo's sterling work with their young actors birthed a musical of pure, uncomplicated sentiment, all of it honestly earned. It must be seen to be believed.

("Children's Letters to God" returns Oct. 6 and Oct. 13 at the Insular Life Auditorium, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang; then on Oct. 20-21 at the RCBC Theater, Makati City. Call 0920-9211231 or 8919999.)

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph, visit www.gibbscadiz.com

TIPPY Dos Santos, Marek Sison, Jaime Cabilig, Aria Clemente and Ruiz Sison in Actor's Actors Inc.'s "Children's Letters to God," directed by Bart Guingona

MIGUEL Castro, Lani Ligot, Arnold Reyes and Ana Feleo in Tanghalang Pilipino's "Pilipinas Circa 1907," directed by Dennis Marasigan

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A modern 'Love's Labour's Lost' from Repertory Philippines

"LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST" IS one of Shakespeare's earlier works and in many ways was his prototype for the later, more arresting comedies.

What primarily attracted director Bart Guingona to the play was its innocence and playfulness. That, and some of the most beautiful lines to come out of the Shakespearean canon: "a lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind, a lover's ear will hear the lowest sound..." Or, "From women's eyes this doctrine I derive; They are the books, the arts, the academes that show, contain and nourish all the world."

Guingona was certain when he first played the male lead of "Love's Labour's Lost" many years ago that the play would fly with a modern audience. He kept telling himself that this play should and would be appreciated by today's audiences if they saw themselves in it. That to him is the hallmark of a classic text—the ability to survive any contemporary rendition through time.

NICCOLO Manahan, Epy Quizon and Gabs Santos

Apart from being confined to a world that seemed to be impervious to the goings-on of the outside world, the students in "Love's Labour's Lost" have something in common with the Catholic co-ed school Guingona grew up in. They live their lives as if courtship and flirtation were the essence of existence. They are forced to grow up when they get caught up in events beyond their control.

With this "Love's Labour's Lost," Guingona remembers his own coming-of-age in the '80s and the political events of the time that forced maturity on him and his generation.

This Repertory Philippines production of "Love's Labour's Lost" stars Niccolo Manahan, Epy Quizon, Hans Eckstein, Gabs Santos, Micah Muñoz, Jenny Jamora, Crisel Consunji, Caisa Borromeo and Cris Villonco portraying the student lovers of Shakespeare's most flamboyant and intellectual play.

Set in the 1980s in Manila's University Belt right before the Edsa Revolution, the days of "Bagets," Spandau Ballet, women with big hair, raccoon eyes, and "what-were-you-thinking" fashion sense, this is Shakespeare with a twist of contemporary Filipino nostalgia.

"Love's Labour's Lost" is showing Oct. 5-6, 8 p.m., and Oct. 7, 3:30 p.m. Call 8870710 or Ticketworld at 8919999.

TIPLES de Sto. Domingo

'SALAMAT, MARIA'

Hymn of gratitude to Our Lady

Composer Vehnee Saturno, musical arranger Louie Ocampo, Basil Valdez and the Tiples de Santo Domingo combine their gifts for a rousing gift of melody to La Naval de Manila

VEHNEE Saturno

By Louie R. Coronel, OP
Contributor

THIS YEAR IS A HIGH POINT for the La Naval de Manila tradition as the Church and nation celebrate the centennial of her canonical coronation.

The centuries-old venerated image of La Naval has been acclaimed by the faithful since 1593 and served as a beacon of faith and hope for the Filipinos through the centuries.

Indeed, La Naval is God's gift for us; and whenever we receive her blessing, we cannot but give thanks. Effusive words and gestures seem not enough to express our gratitude for her, so we find another expression that we can offer: the gift of music.

The idea of an official theme for the centennial crystallized through Elaine Villar, who has not only been in the music industry for some time but is also a dedicated Marian devotee. She called Rev. Jeffrey Aytona, OP, to raise the possibility of a song for La Naval.

Reverend Jeff presented the proposal to Fr. Jojo Dagohoy, OP, chair of the La Naval Centennial Committee, who had a poem dedicated to La Naval by Jovito Cariño, a poet and former Dominican brother.

When Villar received the poem, she promptly contacted her friend, the composer Vehnee Saturno. After a game of basketball, Saturno went to his music room and, while in front of an image of La Naval (a gift by Villar), he began composing the theme music.

Talent coupled with inspiration provoked the musical prowess of a Marian devotee. In an hour, he was finished with his newest musical masterpiece! When Villar listened to it, she was moved and felt the song entering the deep recesses of her heart.

Reverend Jeff was astonished that in 24 hours the song was ready for approval. He asked the Dominican community to listen to the song. The critical acoustic acuity of the Dominican fathers and brothers was satisfied and the song was approved unanimously without much ado.

Villar immediately called Louie Ocampo, whom she considered family. Ocampo, who came from a religious family, as did a musical arrangement of the composition.

Villar asked the opinion of Fr. Boyd Sulpico, OP, who has a keen sense for music, about the song. Upon listening, Fr. Boyd texted her, saying: "Tears were welling in my eyes."

Villar was finally convinced: "This is it!"

But who can perform such masterpiece for La Naval with integrity? There was only one person in mind—Basil Valdez.

As a balladeer famed for inspirational hits such as "Hindi Kita Malilimutan" and "Lead me Lord," he was unanimously chosen to sing the official theme song of the centennial.

Basil's manager, Wyngard Tracy, was very supportive of the project, or, should we say, "gift," and agreed for Basil to perform and record it without any hesitation, even if the singer had already agreed to sing for free in the "Serenata" on Oct. 5.

October 4, coronation day of La Naval, is the formal launching of the official theme song of the Centennial of the Canonical Coronation of La Naval. The 1907 papal coronation will be relived by Church and civil dignitaries and the Catholic faithful that day, at 4 p.m.

Valdez will perform "our gift" to the Blessed Mother with the Tiples de Sto. Domingo and the UST Symphony Orchestra.

The theme is more than just a song. It is a gift of our self to the Blessed Virgin Mary: the talent, the skill, the devotion, the love—all expressed through music.

Schedule of La Naval festivities

Sto. Domingo Church, QC
Sept. 29-Oct. 31: La Naval Memorabilia Exhibit at the Museo de Sto. Domingo
Oct. 4 (4 p.m.): Enthronement and Reenactment Ceremony
Oct. 7: Launching of La Naval coffee-table book
Oct. 5-13 (4 p.m.): Serenata/Novena days
Oct. 5: Basil Valdez
Oct. 6: Las Piñas Boys Choir
Oct. 7: Hangad Jesuit Music Ministry
Oct. 8: Dr. Raul Sunico, professor Eugene de los Santos (tenor), professpr Thea Pérez (soprano), Ronan Ferrer and Nenen Espina
Oct. 9: UP Concert Chorus
Oct. 10: Jose Mari Chan and Jamie Rivera
Oct. 11: Psalterion of UST Central Semi with Miguel Aguila
Oct. 12: Elim Community Music Ministry
Oct. 13: Hail Mary Children's Choir with Carol Lugtu Claro Dance Art School for the Performing Arts
Oct. 14 (4 p.m.): Feast Day of La Naval de Manila
Call 7126271 to 74 or e-mail at lanavaldemanila@yahoo.com.ph

Concert series..

From page D1

Unbeknownst to the general, his second-in-command Admiral Sebastian Lopez made the same vow. Replicas of the Blessed Mother's image were also placed in both galleons and the Rosary was continuously recited.

Thus, from March to October 1646, the battles were fought. And won. From Aparri to Mariveles, Mindoro and Manila, the Filipino-Spanish armada won decisively, losing just 15 Filipino and Spanish soldiers.

On April 9, 1652, the Church's Ecclesiastical Council proclaimed that the victory was of divine and Marian intercession.

In October 1907, the apostolic delegate to the Philippines, Msgr. Ambrose Agius, OSB, fulfilling the papal order of Pope Pius X (later St. Pius X), canonically crowned La Naval de Manila.

A canonical coronation is an act of the Pope, duly expressed through the Papal Bull, wherein the Roman Catholic Church recognizes an image of the Virgin Mary under a specific name being venerated in a certain locality.

The venerated image should be historically old, acclaimed, and in times of need serves as a beacon of faith and hope among the people. It also manifests recognition of the fervent devotion of the faithful.

HANGAD Jesuit music ministry group

Centenary celebration

Filipinos celebrate this month the centennial of the canonical coronation of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. On Oct. 5-13, during the Novena days, the Sto. Domingo Church will present a musical tribute in honor of the celebration every 4 p.m.

Performers include Basil Valdez; Las Piñas Boys Choir; Hangad Jesuit Music Ministry; Dean Raul Sunico of the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music; tenor Eugene de los Santos, soprano Thea Perez, Ronan Ferrer and Nenen Espina; the University of the Philippines Concert Chorus; José Mari Chan, Jamie Rivera; the Psalterion of the UST Central Seminary; Miguel Aguila; Elim Community Music Ministry; and the Hail Mary the Queen Children's Choir with Carol Lugtu Claro Dance Art School for the Performing Arts.

"Salamat Maria," the official theme song for the celebration, will be performed by Valdez along with the Tiples and the Sto. Domingo Male Chorale. (*See related article*)

Rev. Jeff Aytona, OP, chair of the Serenata musical tribute, says the performers have offered their services for free. He encourages devotees to come early if they wish to have seats for the free concerts.

HAIL Mary Children's Choir

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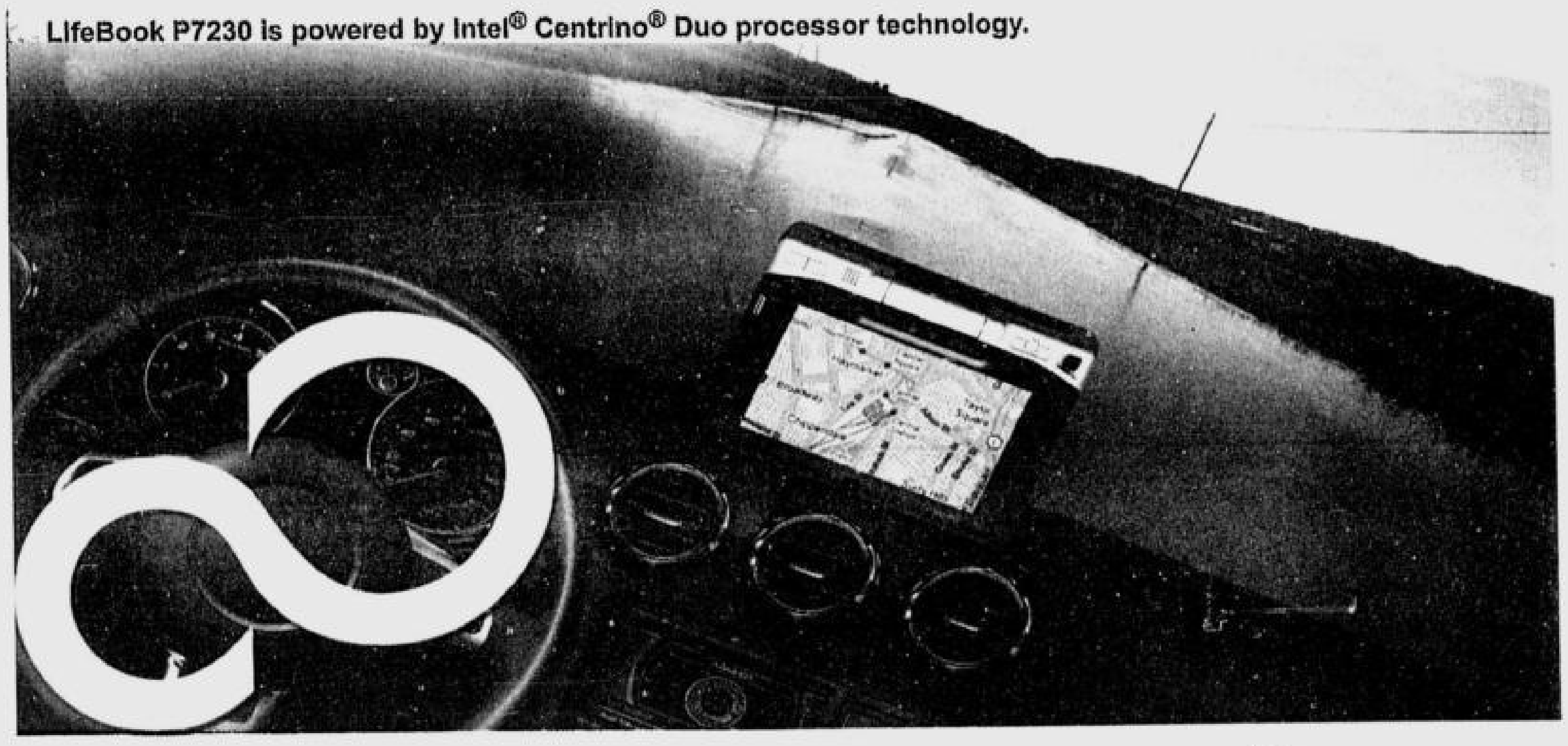

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PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto Villalon

A calendar of heritage updates

THE LATEST IN THE SERIES of desk calendars and postcards published by the Heritage Conservation Society (HCS) where proceeds go to fund the Society's projects, "Heritage Recycled," the 2008 edition of the calendar is ready.

It features fine examples of heritage structures transformed into commercially viable business projects that revitalize dying city centers, enhance values of development projects and attract tourism arrivals.

The calendar shows elegant family residences recycled into boutique hotels and banks, a century-old train terminal (Tutuban) now a shopping mall, and the 1930s Art Deco Manila international airport (Nielson Tower) in Makati is today a research library and bookstore specializing in books by Filipino authors.

Applicable to most heritage structures, adaptive reuse is a creative mode of conservation that gives them new, alternative functions replacing original, outdated functions.

Adaptive reuse can be grand, like the vintage Department of Finance building now the National Museum. On the other hand, the HCS examples show that modest structures, ancestral homes, obscure town halls, colonial watchtowers and bridges, warehouses and train stations have successfully been recycled into sustainable projects.

Most often than not, heritage structures are now on premium real-estate property. Without strong protective legislation in place, the immediate developer impulse is to demolish rather than restore and recycle.

Today, there is a growing awareness that adaptive reuse can enhance property value in many countries.

In Australia, demolition of heritage structures is considered wasteful. Heritage resources are reused because it is good for urban image and the environment. Recycling a valued heritage place, Australians believe, makes adaptive reuse of historic buildings an essential component of sustainable development.

The United States of America abounds with examples of creative (and remunerative) reuse of heritage. Old warehouses in Manhattan's Meatpacking District have been transformed into fashionable and expensive lofts. Elegant mansions in Southern "Gone with the Wind" country are now boutique hotels and restaurant destinations.

MANILA
INTERNATIONAL
AIR TERMINAL

In London, a decommissioned power plant along the River Thames has taken a new life as the popular, elegant Tate Gallery of Modern Art.

In Mexico City, the Cemento Azteca plant is now an environment-friendly children's museum—El Papalote.

Singapore has salvaged a cluster of decrepit shop houses, turning Boat Quay and Clarke Quay into an eclectic mix of high-end restaurants, al fresco dining, dazzling bars and pubs.

In the Philippine scene, recycling heritage and adaptive reuse are still polemical issues. Should heritage conservation be done strictly "in situ"? Should heritage structures be transferred to different sites and settings, when that is the only way to save them? Is adaptive reuse intrusive? Or, should heritage conservation be a priority at all?

HCS participates in the debate with academics, policy makers and planning officials on national and local government levels resulting in the adapting of heritage policy in many instances.

HCS has established good working relations with the Department of Education, Manila Historical and Heritage Commission, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners and local government units.

HCS is involved in actual conservation projects as well. Since 2003, DepEd and HCS have jointly implemented the Heritage Schoolhouse Program where HCS undertook planning and construction supervision for three restored schoolhouses: Rizal Elementary in Bacolod (1904), Pampanga High School in San Fernando (1935) and Baguio Central in Baguio (1908).

Aside from having completed the Teachers Camp Master Conservation Plan (1908), HCS supervises conservation of key historic Teachers Camp buildings. Conservation of Roxas Hall is in progress. Conservation of other historic buildings within the camp are scheduled to start within the next few months.

Seminar program

"Philippine Towns & Cities: Reflections of the Past, Lessons for the Future" is the HCS seminar program that enhances civic engagement with local governments units so that the HCS can inform and guide them on the proper care and utilization of a valuable asset - built heritage resources. The first seminar was held in November 2006 in Manila.

In our towns and cities, wanton real-estate speculation and over-construction are often mistaken for modernization when, in fact, these exert devastating pressure on the historic and cultural core of many of our human settlements. As a result, a valuable economic resource—built heritage—is left to deteriorate or is thoughtlessly demolished in the name of progress.

Concerted effort is imperative to protect heritage resources because these are revenue- and job-generating assets that can spark economic revitalization, as the case of Vigan clearly shows.

However, there is a general lack of awareness in the local government level, which is precisely where policies should be formulated and ordinances passed to declare heritage districts and protect these as the town's or city's prime assets.

Built heritage resources should be the core of any masterplan for urban development and inner town/city revitalization. Livelihood opportunities are generated by adaptive reuse, the revival of traditional crafts for restoration work and an increase in tourism receipts.

Significantly, communities begin to feel a "pride of place."

The Philippine Towns & Cities seminar series is a communications campaign to influence policy-akers at the local government level. Through the Mayors' Forum, best practices are shared. Other stakeholders in the Executive branch, the private sector and academe are invited to participate because heritage conservation is a multidisciplinary concern.

In a second seminar, to be held on Nov. 9 in Iloilo City, with the cooperation of Mayor Jerry Treñas, will take this awareness and education campaign to the local governments of the Visayas, where built heritage resources abound in the cities of Cebu, Bacolod, Iloilo, Dumaguete, Tagbilaran.

HCS is a nonstock, nonprofit, NGO established in 1994, duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and certified by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC). HCS donors receive a tax rebate certificate.

HCS has chapters in the cities of Dagupan, Bacolod, Cebu, Iloilo, San Fernando, (Pampanga); Dapitan, Zamboanga and Silay, in Negros Occidental. Other cities like Baguio and Makati have formed their own heritage commissions.

To guarantee continuity, HCS has set up student chapters at University of the Philippines, University of Santo Tomas, Far Eastern University, Ateneo de Manila, De La Salle University and Adamson University. In the provinces, HCS has chapters at the Holy Angel University (Pampanga), St. Paul's University (Cagayan) and La Salle College (Bacolod).

"Heritage Recycled" is available at the HCS Secretariat at P200 a copy. A 10-percent discount is offered to bonafide HCS members. Bulk orders (minimum 100 copies) also enjoy a 10-percent discount plus printing of personal or business logos.

HCS is at Museo Pambata, Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila. Call 5212239, fax 5222497; e-mail info@heritage.org.ph, visit www.heritage.org.ph or http://heritageconservation.wordpress.com

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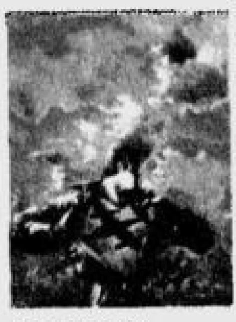
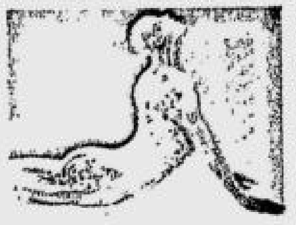
VISUAL ARTS

Ibay, Ruiz, Perez at Astra



"SUPA:U2,"
by José Tence Ruiz



"THE LIZARD King,"
by Dante Perez

Galerie Astra (2/L, LRI Bldg., 210 Nicanor Garcia, Bel-Air II, Makati) presents "K2korpus: Jose Ibay, Dante Perez and Jose Tence Ruiz," three painters and their annual three-sided discourse on the human body in and as art. Perez seizes on it as metasomatic idiom. Ruiz draws on its capacity to articulate politics, desire and aspiration. Ibay shows his striking experimentation of rendering the human face. The exhibit runs Oct. 5-18. Call 8903988.

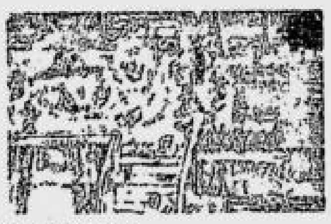
Manalang at Drawing Room

The Drawing Room (Metrostar Bldg., 1007 Metropolitan Avenue, Makati) presents an exhibit of new works by Pep Manalang until Oct. 20. The exhibit features new paintings on canvas and paper, inspired by imaginary landscapes. These works incorporate texture, pencil marks and drips, and feature the repetition of vertical lines to create an aura of meditative silence. Call 8976990/7877.

Piedra at Crucible

Raul Piedra presents "Sanctuary," Oct. 2-8, in Crucible Gallery (4/F SM Megamall, Mandaluyong). Working on small and large canvasses, Piedra continues his textured style of spontaneity and focus on composition over color thus achieving a combination of subtlety and tranquility. Call 6356061.

Coquilla, Ortiz and Dial at West



"IBABAW,"
by Daniel Coquilla

The West Gallery presents Daniel Coquilla's "Ibabaw" featuring flyovers, overpasses, underpasses, beach scenes, fiestas, Santacruzan, parades and even escalator scenes as main subjects. Meanwhile, Renan Ortiz depicts dystopia through a variety of multimedia forms including video, sculpture, neon signs, tarpaulin and mirror images in "Sandosenang Sarap or The Lies and Farce of Inigo Ramus & The Rivet Thieves," at Gallery 2. Ranelle Dial's "Mga Sisidlan" features pieces that reflect the personalities and histories of its owners as well as dug holes that Dial uses as metaphors for open space and nothingness. Four of the nine oil pieces are rendered in black and white. The three exhibits run Oct. 2-Nov. 3. Call 4119221/0336.

Photos by Santos

Melbourne-based photographer Emmanuel Santos presents "The Passing of Light," until Oct. 2 in Silverlens Gallery (2320 Pasong Tamo, Extension, Warehouse 2, Yupangco Bldg., Makati). The 38 photographs featured in the exhibit are drawn on the holy scriptures of the Bible, Torah and Koran. Call 8160044.

Lorenzo at Y

Galerie Y (Glorietta 4, 3/L, Ayala Center, Makati) presents "Quintessence," a one-woman show by Carol Marie Lorenzo, until Oct. 2. Lorenzo's show is an anthropological tour-de-force. Her abstract interpretation of portraiture exemplifies simplicity and economics.

Book details life and times of Makati village

BEL-AIR in Makati marks its 50th anniversary with the coffee-table book, "Turning Pages: 50 Years of Bel-Air,"

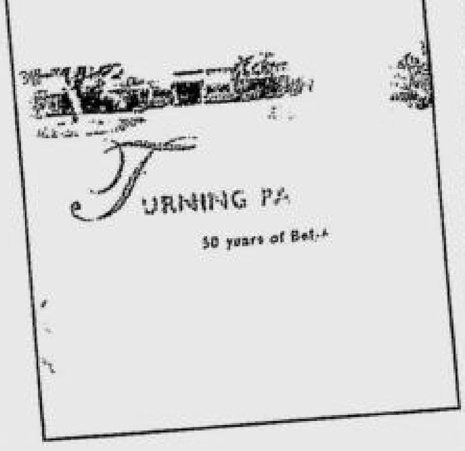
The book chronicles the history of Bel-Air. Jaime Laya recounts tales shared by past and present residents. Alya Honasan peeks into the lifestyle of the women of Bel-Air in "It's a Woman's World,, and art critic Cid Reyes recounts happy times of young villagers of Bel-Air in "Kababata: Growing Up Together in Bel-Air." He says, "Bel-Air provided an ideal environment for the children who grew up there for the past five decades."

Bel-Air will not be complete without the commercial landscape of Salcedo Village. From organic treats and one-of-a-kind pieces from the Salcedo Market to exciting events and concerts, Bel-Air offered holistic activities for all to foster community building. Barbara Gonzalez writes about these in "Life in Salcedo."

The core values of this community, hallmarking camaraderie and togetherness, are brought to life in the annual Pasinaya celebration. Francine Medina describes the grand fiesta in the heart of the Makati business district in her article, "Pasinaya: Bel-Air's Heart and Soul." She says, "Though Bel-Air families are diverse, the town fiesta brings them together in the spirit of fostering a stronger bond among members of the community." Aside from stories and insights, family recipes from the residents of Bel-Air themselves will also be featured.

Reyes, editor of the book, summarizes the book's essence, "A nostalgic trip to the past, a delicious food trip, as prepared by Bel-Air's chefs and foodies, and a glimpse into the future of a dynamic community as a model of cherished Filipino values: bayanihan, pakikisama, pagdiriwang."

This book was done with the support of the Women of Bel-Air Foundation Inc. and the participation of Ayala Land and Rockwell.



"Turning Pages: 50 Years of Bel-Air" will be launched on the evening of Oct. 2 at the Multi-Purpose Hall of Bel-Air. Call 8954011 / 8996509 / 8954408 and look for Liann Panghulan or visit www.barangay-belair.ph.

WWII traveling exhibit now in Dumaguete

PVB and Ateneo de Zamboanga University officials attend the ribbon-cutting ceremonies of the Veterans Bank traveling exhibit: Presidential assistant for Veterans Affairs Jesus Terry Adevoso (partly hidden); Fr. Antonio F. Moreno, SJ, Ateneo de Zamboanga president; VFP district commander Leandro Pacio; City Councilor Jaime Cabato (partly hidden); Rep. Maria Isabelle Climaco; and PVB vice president for corporate communications Mike Villareal.

PVB'S travelling exhibit in Silliman, Dumaguete is formally opened by WWII veteran Uy Suy Kuan of the Wha Chi 48th squadron; Negros Oriental Vice Gov. José Baldado; Gladys Rio Malayang; Silliman president Ben Malayang III; Justice Venancio Aldecoa, a WWII veteran; and VFP district commander Dominador Dumalag, Dumaguete City administrator.

THE WORLD WAR II EXHIBIT OF THE Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB), "The War of Our Fathers… A tribute to the Filipino Freedom Fighter," has been brought to Mindanao and Visayan cities.

It is in the main library of Silliman University, Dumaguete City, until Oct. 10.

After Dumaguete, the exhibit will be brought to Tacloban City in time for the 63rd commemoration of MacArthur's Leyte landing.

The exhibit features WWII vintage photographs, artifacts and memorabilia. It aims to share with the public compelling and dramatic stories of Filipino war heroes.

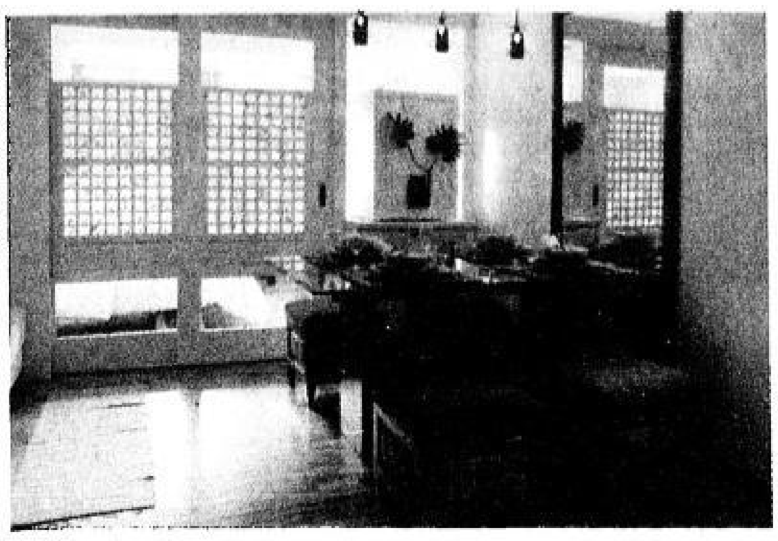
PVB president Ricardo A. Balbido Jr. said through this project, the bank hoped to honor WWII heroes and to help educate Filipinos, especially the youth, on one of the darkest chapters in Philippine history.

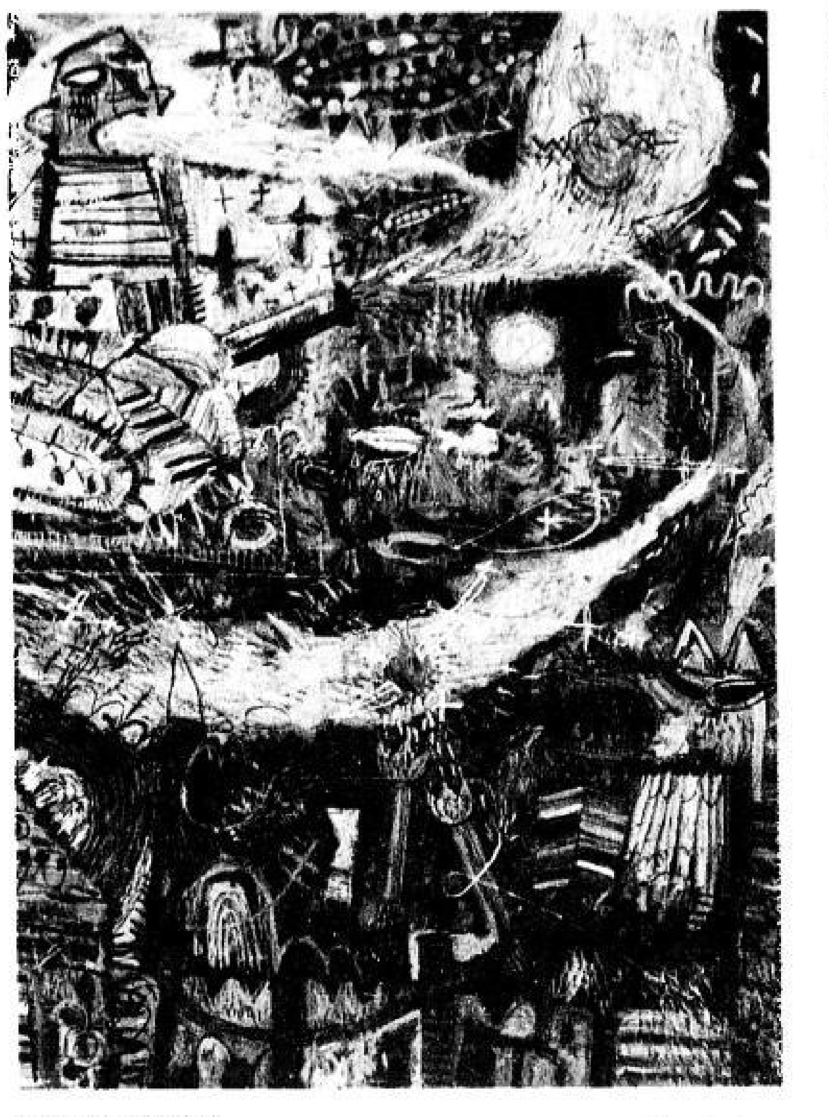
A private commercial bank, PVB is owned by some 300,000 World War II veterans and heirs.

PANCHO PIANO TO EXHIBIT IN NEW YORK

Artist Pancho Piano poses with guests Aurora Lazo of SM Lazo Medical Center, Connie Guanzon-Garcia and Ambassador to Russia Victor Garcia during the opening of his exhibit in Heritage Gallery. Piano is set to hold a solo exhibit in Chelsea Art Museum, 556 W. 22 St., New York City, on Oct. 8, upon the invitation of Sorrel Publishing Company. "Luminous Space" features the Peñafrancia festival, Mayon impressions, Ibalong folklore and Bicol fiestas done in both abstract and figurative.

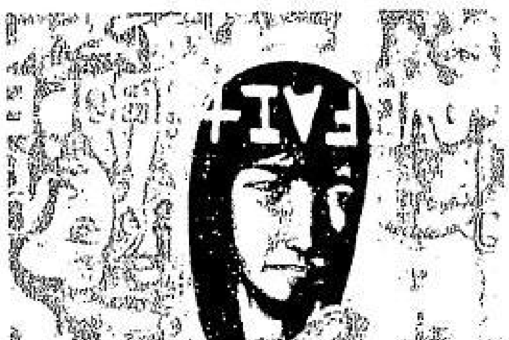
"KASAYSAYAN sa Bawa't Oras," by Juan Sajid Imao

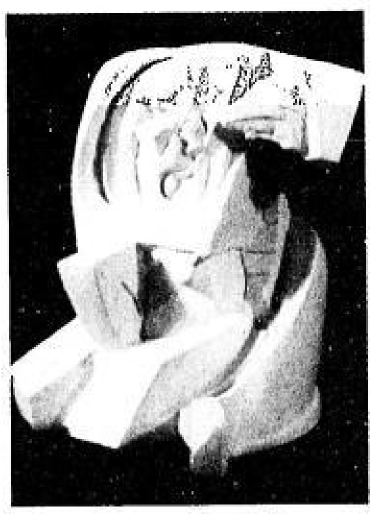

"LIVING within Nature's Confines," by Wilhemina S. Garcia


"THE ATTACK of the Righteous," by Mark Andy R. Garcia

Again, the question: Should art be useful?

By Constantino C. Tejero


"LOVEFAITHHOPE," by Lynyrd Arwyn V. Paras


"YAKAP," by Glennd R. Pagaduan

"A PROTEST against the Guimaras Oil Spill," by Harry Mark C. Gonzales

THE METROBANK ART & DESIGN Excellence (MADE) must be the most comprehensive national art competition today, as it gives equal emphasis to visual and allied arts and includes categories not only in sculpture and painting (oil and water-based medium) but also in architecture and interior design.

Also, it has adopted the advocacy "Your environment shapes you." And it's not only a slogan but a total approach: "We believe that a creative and sustainable environment fosters holistic human development."

Thus, in a statement, the Metrobank Foundation betrays a propensity for utilitarian art: "More than just mimicking or complementing the beauty of nature, art has developed pragmatic practices for sustaining the environment."

That's rather limiting. But if it is really for excellence these artists are striving, and the organizers are, in effect, promoting a culture of excellence, we're for it, too.

This year's MADE held its awarding ceremony and opened a gala exhibit of the winners and finalists on Sept. 21 at Le Pavilion, Metrobank Avenue, Metropolitan Park, Roxas Blvd. and Edsa, Pasay. It was an impressive show, including the program, particularly the presentation of the winners with clips of their artworks projected on three panels in the background.

The exhibit transfers today to the Metrobank Plaza lobby on Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue in Makati, and runs until Oct. 12.

Tenuous connection

We would want to know, though, whether the environment the organizers are speaking about is related to ecology. Because if that's the case, we don't see how the winning paintings and sculptures can be very useful.

These pieces have aesthetics of their own that can't be tied to a slogan or even apprehended by a garden-variety environmentalist.

Mark Andy Garcia's "The Attack of the Righteous," grand-prize winner in oil on canvas, displays an intense expressionism that could no more cleanse the artist's psyche than it could clean the sewers.

Jaime Gubaton's "Connected," third prize in oil, is a photorealist monochromatic image of powerlines and electric posts. The three-figure composition obviously references the Calvary and could have been a potent indictment of urban mess, but the artist chooses to sentimentalize the skyline with pigeons.

Harry Mark Gonzales' "A Protest against the Guimaras Oil Spill," grand prize in sculpture, depicts the monstrous mutation and suffering of marine life. In creating the terracotta piece, the artist is said to have even mixed the black oil with the red clay as a way of memorializing that environmental havoc. The artwork, however, has a life of its own, and whatever connection it has to the ecological disaster is tenuous and can be gleaned only from the title.

Mervin Vergara's "Weaving Dreams," grand prize in water-based medium on paper, alludes to the environment with its monochromatic pattern mimicking indigenous weave, but it's pure *decoratif*.

Glennd Pagaduan's "Yakap," a rendition of the Mother and Child in synthetic marble which received a special citation, is quite beautiful in its expressiveness—but it's just an expression of emotion, motherly love, obviously irrelevant to sustainable environment.

"THE HOUSE of X: An Extraordinarily Cross-Ventilated X-Form Home," by José Ricardo A. Adriano

True strength

What obviously work for the environment are the allied arts. MADE has been credited as "the only art program recognizing achievements in architecture and interior design." And herein lies its true strength.

Take José Ricardo Adriano's "The House of X: An Extraordinarily Cross-Ventilated X-Form Home," grand prize in architecture. For this house in Alabang, the architect tapped the traditional *ventanilla* and extensively used it around the structure to serve as cooling system and source of natural light for the interiors.

Adriano has been praised for his "environmentally receptive homes" and for designing "climactically responsive structures integrated with modern technology and materials," which is just as well.

In interior design, the entries prove to be just as ecologically attuned and environmentally effective. Design masterpieces have been created from recycled junk and indigenous materials.

Cheryl Montebon's "Cocoon," which received a special citation, uses stones, shells, bamboo planks.

Wilhemina Garcia's grand-prize winner "Living within Nature's Confines" uses a lot of junk but one would be hard put to identify them amid that elegance: capiz windows transformed into a sliding room partition; mirrored cabinet used as ceiling accent; sofa springs turned into light fixtures.

Elite circle

The Metrobank Foundation Prize for Achievement in Sculpture was given to Juan Sajid Imao. He joins previous winners Dan Raralio, Duddley Diaz and Peter de Guzman, whom MADE recognizes as "the elite circle of pioneering young sculptors."

Imao is noted for integrating into his art indigenous motifs such as the *ukkil* and the *sarimanok*. Although a Muslim, he doesn't flinch from Christian iconography and has created stately statuary of Christ and crucifixes.

He has been cited mostly for his public art, those monuments to Rizal in Fort Santiago, Cavite and Ateneo de Manila University; Gabriela Silang in Abra; Lapu-Lapu in the Agrifina Circle. An interesting addition to these monumental sculptures is "Kasaysayan sa Bawa't Oras," that massive bronze sundial installed in Fort Bonifacio Global City.

These, of course, are environmental art. The others may be there only for beholding and admiring, but the last is interactive, and so comes handy when the kids get restless.

Pacena's circular . . .

From page D6

painted, even penciled and scratched, as some seem. It shows a lone tree standing on a grassy expanse, the opposite of the video cityscape.

Pacena's variation of Kilmer's line for the title could be a chide to the inhabitants of the former for not making the simpler choice; it may also bring an industry-vs-environment slant.

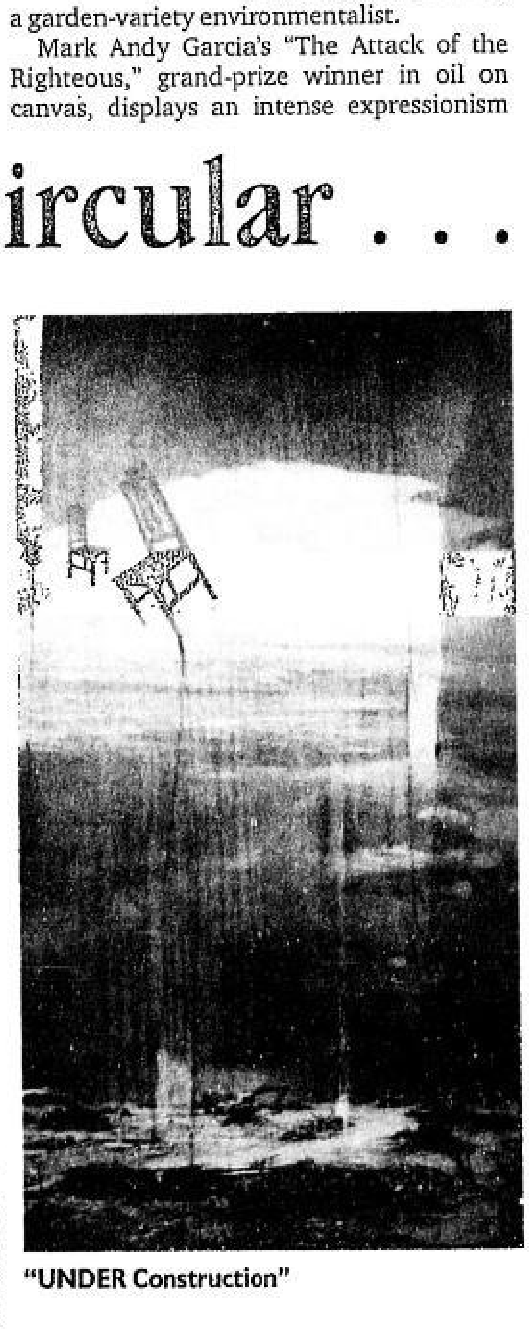
After all, this major solo exhibition is what the artist calls his "...commentary on life. It plays with the representation of dichotomies: good and evil, suffering and joy, and the cycle of life and death."

Apt for the reference to cycles are the red balls present in most of his pieces in this body of works which he says represent circumstances that individuals randomly find themselves in. They are perhaps like bubbles of predicament that can enclose any human being at any given time.

These experiences may entail pain, sorrow, euphoria or anger, all of which various people may express as with the color red, incidentally the shade constant in all of the works.

Lifeblood

As lifeblood of the artworks, the crimson paint that had been washed and dripped down one side or from the top of the canvas may very well be Pacena's own. He depicts with empathy the travails of souls trudging the same paths, bearing the same burdens despite their different lives.


"UNDER Construction"

"The Quick Brown Dog Jumped Down and Died" apparently from crisscrossed wires above the grassy foreground while people continue traversing the lines against buildings in the distance. These are the tightrope walkers in the circus of life, on each of them seems to have dripped the contents of those spheres of predicament. They are teetering birds on the wires of existence.

In "And So It Is," a flat plank curves into, then out of, yet another red ball then splits two ways toward opposite directions. Evidence again of common experiences with different outcomes that result in differing choices as Pacena portrays his take on "free will."

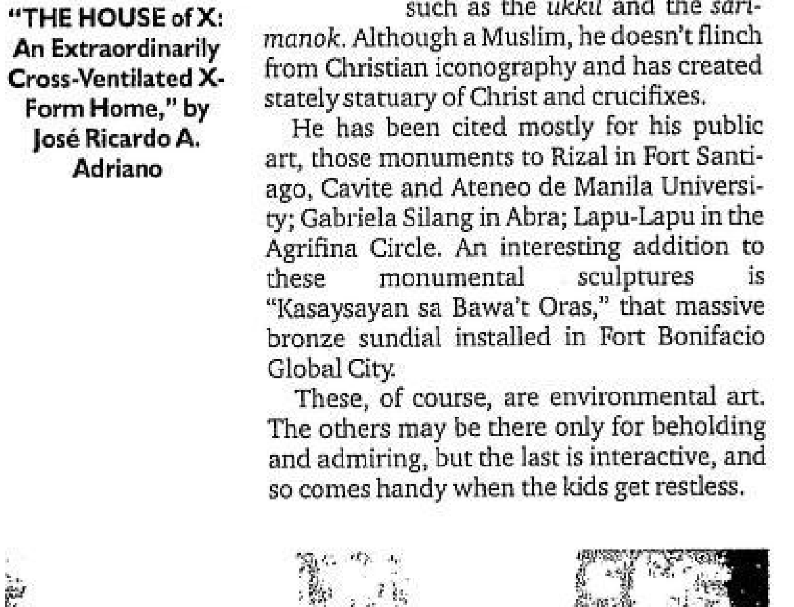
"Humps Ahead" also features the flat curved planks, his "paths" this time are cut after they rise, as if humps with gaps in between.

Here he "depicts the illusionary life map we create." Whether the boy on the bicycle will fall or land safely over on the next path will depend on how well he controls his jump with the bike, or he may very well turn back.

As the artist says: "Life is about connections and relationships and the challenges we encounter in between destinations.

"We make our challenges in the landscape we call reality. Do the conflicts really exist? Or is it all in the mind?"

Certainly, these were all conflicts on Pacena's mind, finely attuned to dichotomies. He had ably executed them with computer-enhanced pictures of green grounds contrasted against urban or industrial sites in states of destruction or smoggy hazes, his "reality landscapes" he had devised through "decalcomania and painting."


"I AM the Dust, You Are the Dust"

That his photograph-canvases have been printed with archival ink assures that his artworks would stand the test of time. And they should, for this multimedia man's rhetoric will always be humankind's, too.

"Parallel Wounds" runs until Oct. 7 at Pasilyo Guillermo Tolentino, Cultural Center of the Philippines, 10 a.m.-6 p.m, Tuesday-Sunday. Call 8323702 or 0915-7810135.

E-mail the author at majorday@gmail.com

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Pacena's circular *parallelisms*

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

"WHEN Day and Night Collides"

IN THE MIDDLE OF the exhibit "Parallel Wounds" is a two-hour video loop titled "City of Wounded Souls."

Presented on a Bravia screen provided by Sony Corp., the predominantly blue-tinged footage might appear unchanging at first, as it shows the Edsa-Ortigas interchange with its flyovers, smattering of high-rise buildings, and the roofs of surrounding upscale residences.

Then one notices movement—vehicular traffic, traveling buses and cars tiny on the already wide screen.

Flanked by seven large works on each side, artist Jaime Pacena II renders his video art as part of a question Which would give you a sensible definition of comfort? Is it an urban environment with all the artificial luxuries?

He thus pairs it with "I Think They Shall Never See," hung to the right of the television screen, to further query: "Or is it a simple life in some obscure location?"

The latter is one of the 14 digitally manipulated photographs printed on canvas, manually

PACENA/ D5

Panasonic ideas for life

40 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE
Art of life
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Some of the county's most prominent professional photographers attend Panasonic's photo contest launch. In photo are Wig Tysmans, George Tapan, Mandy Navasero and Raffy Paredes (representing Jim Paredes)together with Panasonic Executives Rene Almeda, Hiroyuki Iwaki and Ellen Suarez.

Deadline for Panasonic's *"The Art of Life"* photo contest extended!

Panasonic, one of the country's premier brands in the appliance and electronics industry, extends its target for the "The Art of Life by Panasonic" photo contest up to October 05, 2007, providing more chances for amateur and professional photographers to showcase their photography repertoire.

Panasonic hopes to highlight photographic excellence that is distinctly Pinoy as the creative flair of many Filipinos behind the lens will be put to the test.

Explore and tinker on motion, colors and angles vis-à-vis life's greatest wonders like travel, music, fashion, sports, careers, family-oriented concepts and other daily occurrences in the urban and rural settings, highlighting the "art of life" present in both the traditional and modern ways of living.

After "The Art of Life by Panasonic" finalists are chosen, they will continue their artistic quest through a depiction of "Panasonic in the life of the consumers" by going to the nearest Panasonic dealers and portray Panasonic's contribution to the Filipino way of life.

As the art in innovation is set in focus, Panasonic takes another milestone of modern technology for the society's continuous development.

Only one entry per photographer is allowed. Any type or brand of camera can be used in the contest. Each entry should be both in an unmounted printed sample sizes placed in flat packages or mailing tubes and in digital files in CD format. Place your name, address and contact numbers on the back of the envelope for your submitted entries.

Entries will be judged according to creativity, relevance to theme, quality of presentation and visual impact. First prize winner will receive P50,000, second prize winner P30,000 and the third prize winner P15,000. The top three winners will also receive their own Panasonic camera each.

Interested individuals may send their entries to Full Circle Communications at 15/F Belvedere Tower, San Miguel Ave. Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Tel. Nos. 637-1118/637-1116

Panasonic
Digital Photography Contest

RULES AND MECHANICS:

1. **Eligibility.** All photographers ages 18 and above are eligible. Only one entry per photographer is allowed.

2. **Camera Brand.** Any type or brands of cameras are allowed to be used for the contest.

3. **Submission of Entries:**
   a. Entries should be submitted in unmounted printed sample (size).
   b. Digital files: RGB (not CMYK), JPG format with a maximum width of 1024 pixels and a maximum height of 768 pixels (72 dpi) . Digital files will be projected for the judges.
   c. Entries that are unmounted should be in flat packages or mailing tubes. Digital files must be in CD format.
   d. Strictly no Photoshop (or any other software) manipulation for the submitted entries.
   e. Each entry should have a one-sentence explanation for their captured images along with the appropriate title.
   f. Deadline for submission of entries will be on September 30, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. adddressed to Full Circle Communications, Inc. at the 15th Floor, Belvedere Tower, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

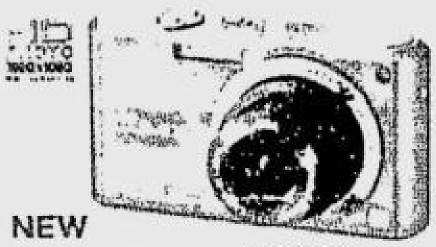
4. **Criteria for Judging:**

a. Creativity - 30%	The amount of imagination, artistic merit, originality and expressiveness of the photo.
b. Relevance to theme - 25%	How well does the entry achieve its client's mission. How does it exactly convey the message of the contest ?
c. Quality of Presentation - 20%	The amount of style, skill and craft that was put into the entry.
d. Visual Impact - 25%	How well does the entry communicate ?

5. **Prizes :** (Participants can only win once)

Major Prizes :	1st Prize	: Php 50,000 + a Panasonic Camera
	2nd Prize	: Php 30,000 + a Panasonic Camera
	3rd Prize	: Php 15,000 + a Panasonic Camera
Finalists :	Panasonic Certificates and Gift Bags.	

6. **Contest Promo.** School tours will be conducted to promote " The Art of Life by Panasonic " photography contest.
7. **Decision.** Judges' decision is final.
8. **Disqualification.** Employees of Panasonic Philippines, its advertising and public relations agencies, including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the contest.
9. **Announcement of Winners.** Winning entries shall be announced on October 15, 2007.



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THE LAVISHLY embroidered La Naval vestment.

THE SAGA OF
LA NAVAL
TRIUMPH OF A PEOPLE'S FAITH

THE VAST throng that took part in the traditional La Naval celebration in 1907. Newspaper estimates put the crowd at 150,000, the biggest crowd of its time.

The Mother of all *icons*

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

DONATIONS of gems and jewels across the centuries has made the scepter of La Naval richly ornate.

OCTOBER IN MANILA IS SO famously nostalgic because this was the month of the city's greatest fiestas," writes Nick Joaquin in his book, "Almanac for Manileños" (Mr and Ms Publishing Co.).

"The celebrations began in Intramuros—*sa loob ng Maynila*—with the novena of the Santo Rosario of the Dominicans and the pageantry of La Naval," the National Artist says, adding:

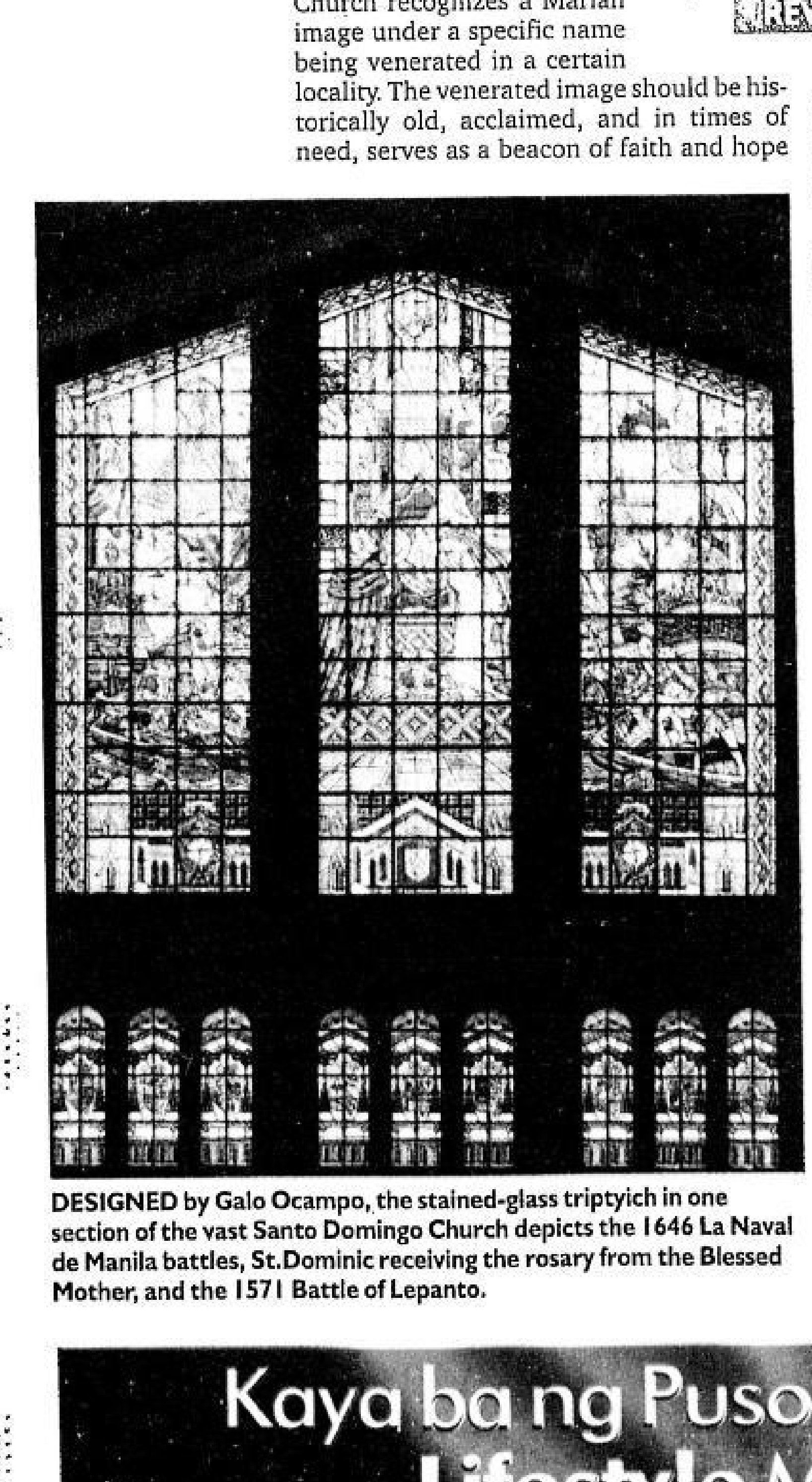
"The month was thus one long festive chain, from La Naval de Manila to the fiesta in Binondo, and each festival has its own *feria* and concerts and gala procession. La Naval was Old Manila's *'procession de los processiones.'*

The focus of the celebrations then and now is the image of Our Lady of the Rosary, La Naval de Manila. The Manila icon was canonically crowned in 1907 as Queen and Patroness of the Philippines, the first Marian icon in the Philippines to have enjoyed the privilege. It was said that upon the personal request of the Dominican leadership in 1906 in the Vatican, Pope Pius X quickly acceded to the request and himself wrote down the accession long-hand right there and then.

The canonical privilege given to La Naval cannot be taken for granted. A canonical coronation is an act of the Pope, duly expressed through a papal bull, wherein the Roman Catholic Church recognizes a Marian image under a specific name being venerated in a certain locality. The venerated image should be historically old, acclaimed, and in times of need, serves as a beacon of faith and hope among the people. It also manifests recognition of the fervent devotion of the faithful.

> To mark the 100th anniversary of the papal coronation of La Naval de Manila, the Philippine Dominican Province will launch on Oct. 7 the mother of all coffee-table books, 'The Saga of La Naval: Triumph of a People's Faith'

This year marks the centenary of the coronation, and the Philippine Dominican Province has published the lavish coffee-table book, "The Saga of La Naval: Triumph of a People's Faith (2007, 523 pages)," to commemorate the historic event.



DESIGNED by Galo Ocampo, the stained-glass triptyich in one section of the vast Santo Domingo Church depicts the 1646 La Naval de Manila battles, St.Dominic receiving the rosary from the Blessed Mother, and the 1571 Battle of Lepanto.

Miracle of 1646

The image gained legendary status during the five famous battles of La Naval in 1646, in which an ill-equipped Filipino-Spanish fleet emerged triumphant over the powerful Protestant Dutch armada.

The victory, considered miraculous, was attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Mother under her title, Our Lady of the Rosary, to whom the Filipinos and Spaniards had prayed constantly before and after the battles.

"The year 1846 was a nervous year for both Spaniards and native Filipinos," reports Florentino H. Hornedo in "Battle of La Naval," a chapter in this book under review. "For decades the Dutch had marauded the Southeast Asian seas, and their pirate ships lay in wait for Philippine galleons from Mexico's rich trade, and for hapless merchant ships in southern Philippine and Indonesian seas."

Much of Manila still lay in ruins, following a severe earthquake the previous year. And the only ships defending the country then were two merchant galleons which were hastily converted into battleships. The battleground stretched from the waters of Pangasinan in the north to Masbate in the south.

The first battle occurred on March 16 off Bolinao, Pangasinan, followed by another encounter on July 29 in an island south of Marinduque and north Romblon. The battle was in the afternoon and a Dutch fireboat was sunk. The third engagement witnessed a heavy volley of cannon shots, and an exchange of artillery fire likened to "the explosion of so many volcanoes." This was on July 31 between Mindoro and Maestre de Campo Island.

A lull lasting for six weeks ensued, with

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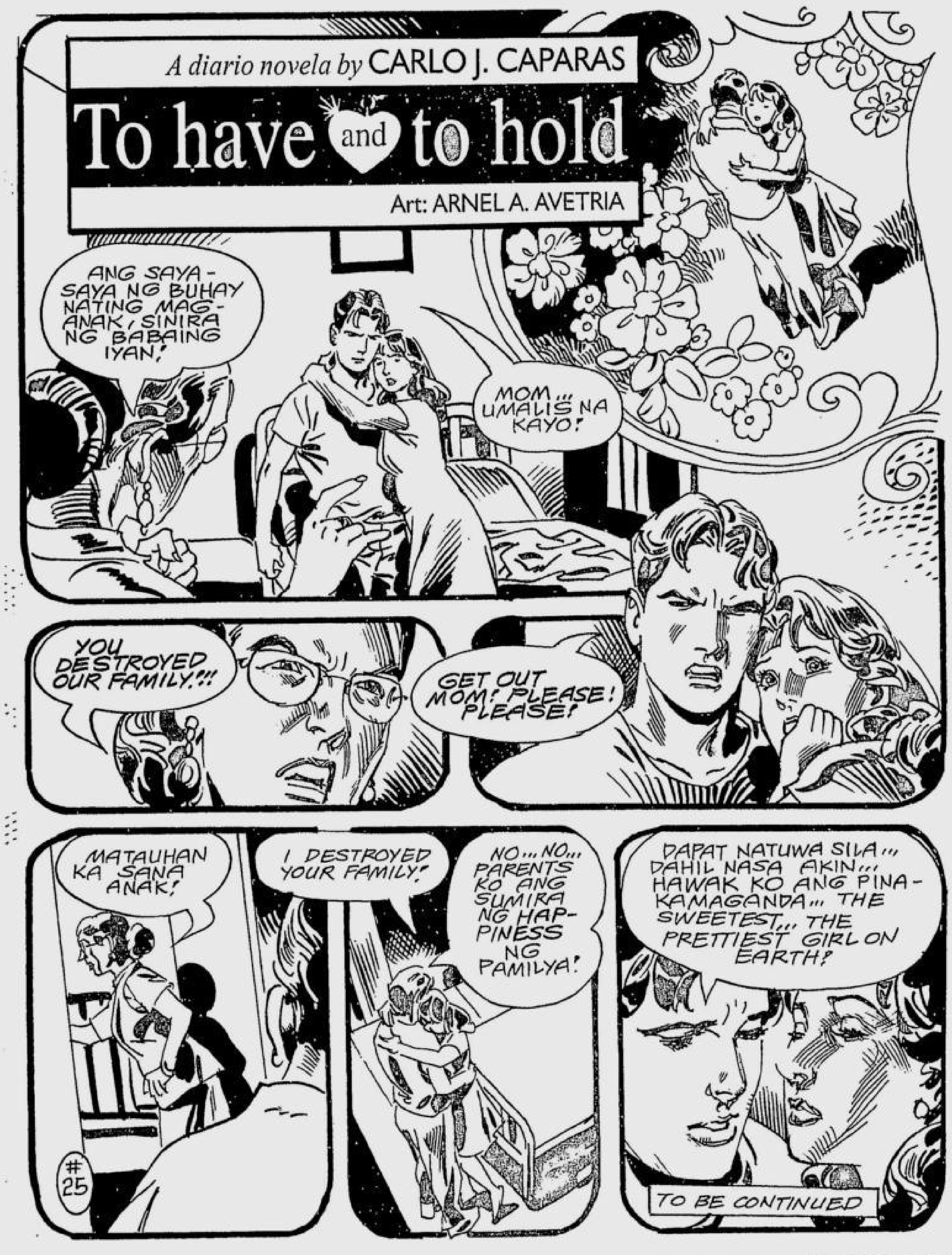
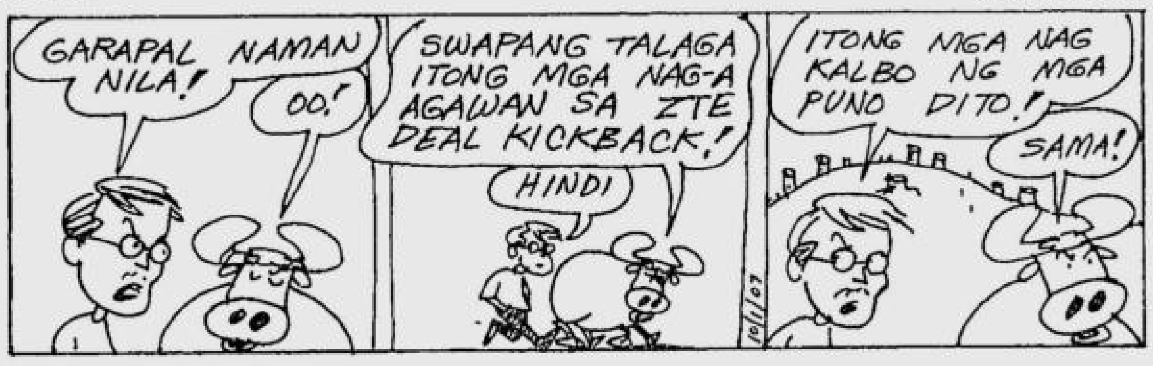
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


ANG SAYA-SAYA NG BUHAY NATING MAG-ANAK, SINIRA NG BABAING IYAN!
MOM... UMALIS NA KAYO!
YOU DESTROYED OUR FAMILY!!!
GET OUT MOM! PLEASE! PLEASE!
MATAUHAN KA SANA ANAK!
I DESTROYED YOUR FAMILY!
NO... NO... PARENTS KO ANG SUMIRA NG HAPPINESS NG PAMILYA!
DAPAT NATUWA SILA... DAHIL NASA AKIN... HAWAK KO ANG PINAKAMAGANDA... THE SWEETEST... THE PRETTIEST GIRL ON EARTH!
#25
TO BE CONTINUED

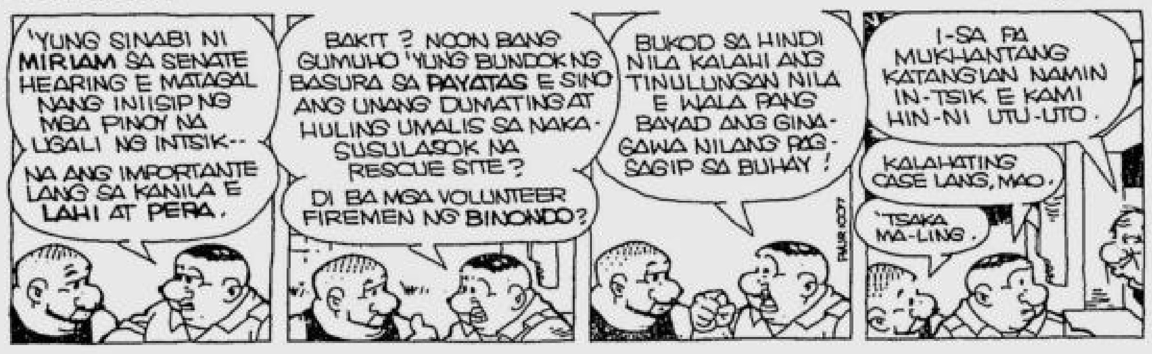
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GARAPAL NAMAN NILA!
OO!
SWAPANG TALAGA ITONG MGA NAG-AAGAWAN SA ZTE DEAL KICKBACK!
HINDI
10/1/07
ITONG MGA NAG KALBO NG MGA PUNO DITO!
SAMA!

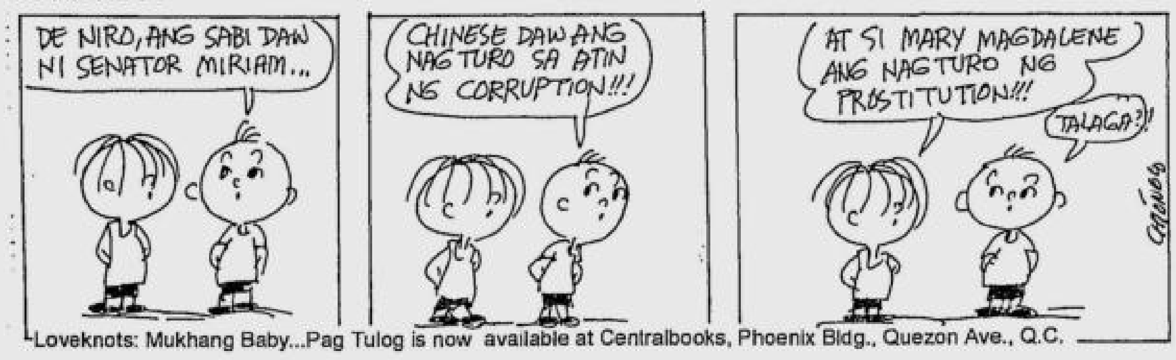
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'YUNG SINABI NI MIRIAM SA SENATE HEARING E MATAGAL NANG INIISIP NG MGA PINOY NA UGALI NG INTSIK--
NA ANG IMPORTANTE LANG SA KANILA E LAHI AT PERA.
BAKIT ? NOON BANG GUMUHO 'YUNG BUNDOK NG BASURA SA PAYATAS E SINO ANG UNANG DUMATING AT HULING UMALIS SA NAKA-SUSULASOK NA RESCUE SITE ?
DI BA MGA VOLUNTEER FIREMEN NG BINONDO?
BUKOD SA HINDI NILA KALAHI ANG TINULUNGAN NILA E WALA PANG BAYAD ANG GINAGAWA NILANG PAG-SAGIP SA BUHAY !
I-SA PA MUKHANTANG KATANGIAN NAMIN IN-TSIK E KAMI HIN-NI UTU-UTO.
KALAHATING CASE LANG, MAO.
'TSAKA MA-LING.

LOVEKNOTS

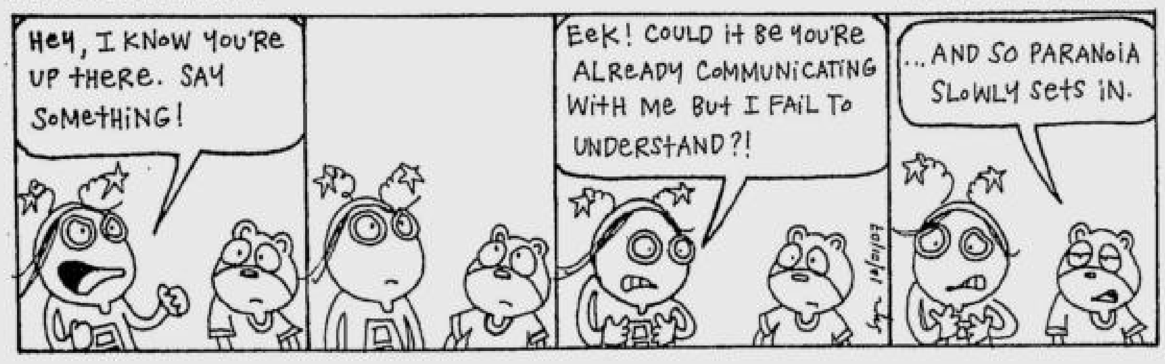
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, ANG SABI DAW NI SENATOR MIRIAM...
CHINESE DAW ANG NAGTURO SA ATIN NG CORRUPTION!!!
AT SI MARY MAGDALENE ANG NAGTURO NG PROSTITUTION!!!
TALAGA?!

Loveknots: Mukhang Baby...Pag Tulog is now available at Centralbooks, Phoenix Bldg., Quezon Ave., Q.C.

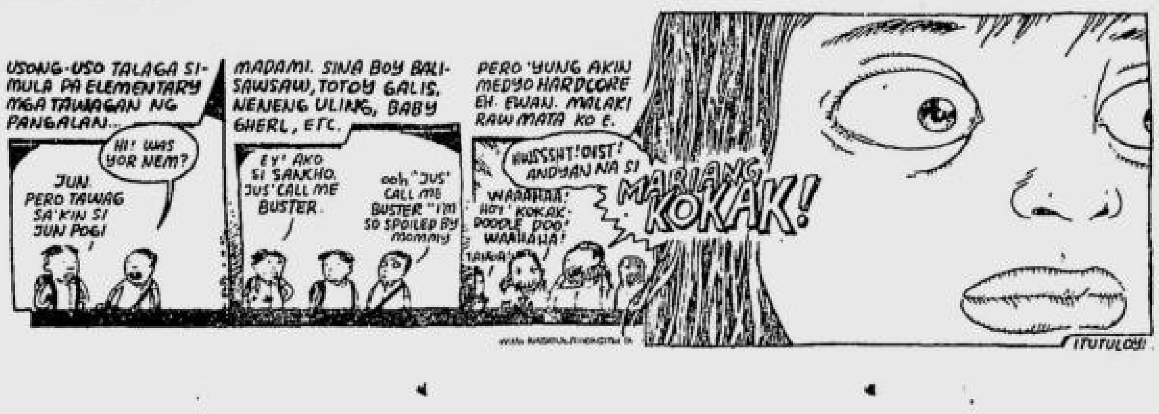
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

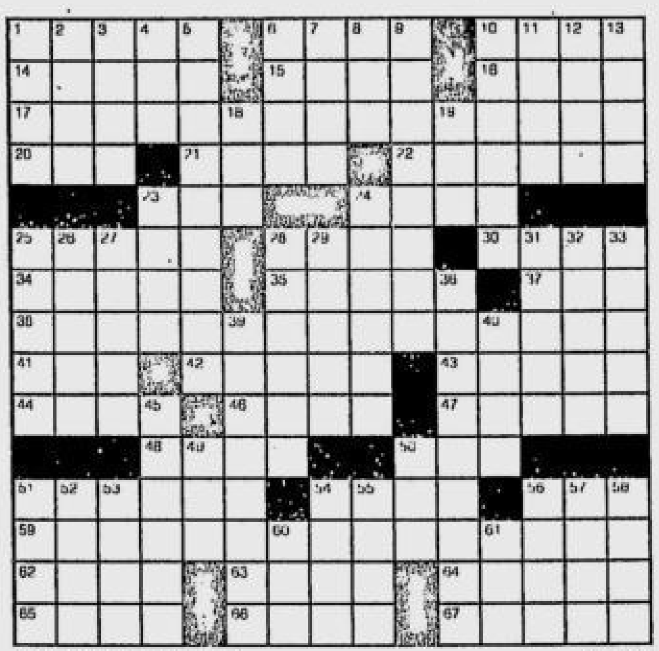

Hey, I KNOW YOU'RE UP THERE. SAY SOMETHING!
EEK! COULD IT BE YOU'RE ALREADY COMMUNICATING WITH ME BUT I FAIL TO UNDERSTAND?!
...AND SO PARANOIA SLOWLY SETS IN.

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


USONG-USO TALAGA SIMULA PA ELEMENTARY MGA TAWAGAN NG PANGALAN...
HI! WAS YOR NEM?
JUN. PERO TAWAG SA'KIN SI JUN POGI
MADAMI. SINA BOY BALISAWSAW, TOTOY GALIS, NENENG ULING, BABY GHERL, ETC.
EY' AKO SI SANCHO. JUS' CALL ME BUSTER.
ooh "JUS' CALL ME BUSTER" "I'M SO SPOILED BY MOMMY"
PERO 'YUNG AKIN MEDYO HARDCORE EH. EWAN. MALAKI RAW MATA KO E.
PSSSHT! OIST! ANDYAN NA SI
MARIANG KOKAK!
WAAAHAA! HOY' KOKAK-DOODLE DOO! WAAHAHA!
ITUTULOY!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL
10/1/07

ACROSS
1 Civilian clothes
6 Attendee
10 Small salmon
14 Of bees
15 Cosmetics ingredient
16 Father of Balder
17 Hope/Crosby film
20 Blasting letters
21 Bus. show
22 Habituates
23 Young salmon
24 Objective
25 Dweeb
28 Alert to danger
30 Collected charity
34 Avid
35 Of a pelvic bone
37 Moray
38 Larry McMurtry novel
41 Golfer's need
42 City on the Adige
43 Earn
44 Liberal or fine follower
46 Beer picks
47 __ out (intimidate)
48 Fastidious
50 Teacher's favorite
51 Make certain
54 Biblical grain measure
56 TV spots
59 Monopoly property
62 Bypass
63 Garden dandy
64 Boxing venue
65 Lulus
66 Guitarist Lofgren
67 Stair post

DOWN
1 K follower?
2 Resting atop
3 Italian automaker
4 Bit
5 Act the translator
6 Struggle for breath
7 Assortment
8 Geological time period
9 Provincial
10 Linking verb
11 Aroma
12 Place on the payroll
13 Billfold fillers
18 Moronic start?
19 Santa __, CA
23 At liberty
24 Swindles
25 Seed covering
26 Irrigate
27 Long-legged wader
28 With intelligence
29 In solitary
31 Apprehensive
32 Battlefield lifesaver
33 Deadly sin
36 Vehicle for the woods
39 Surrenders as part payment
40 Quiet relaxation
45 Action-scene elements
49 Anger
50 Garden vegetable
51 Perched on
52 18-wheeler
53 Quick cut
54 Eye of a Frenchman
55 Make untidy
56 Again
57 Sand ridge
58 Make watertight
60 Indian title
61 Afore

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	L	U	M	S		A	L	L		B	O	T	C	H
N	O	N	C	E		R	O	I		A	D	E	L	A
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A	R	R		A	M	A	T	E	U	R		P	I	P
R	E	E	N	T	E	R		T	R	A	C	E	R	Y
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R	I	N	S	E		M	I	R		E	L	S	A	S
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10/1/07

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

7				9				2
		2		1	6			
	1	5	8			6		4
9			2				4	8
				3				
6	8				9			5
2		9			4	3	8	
			9	8		4		
5				7				6

Difficulty Level ★
10/01

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Answer to previous puzzle

9	8	2	1	5	3	6	4	7
5	4	7	6	8	9	1	3	2
3	6	1	4	7	2	5	9	8
4	7	6	2	1	8	3	5	9
1	9	8	7	3	5	4	2	6
2	3	5	9	6	4	8	7	1
8	1	9	3	4	7	2	6	5
7	5	3	8	2	6	9	1	4
6	2	4	5	9	1	7	8	3

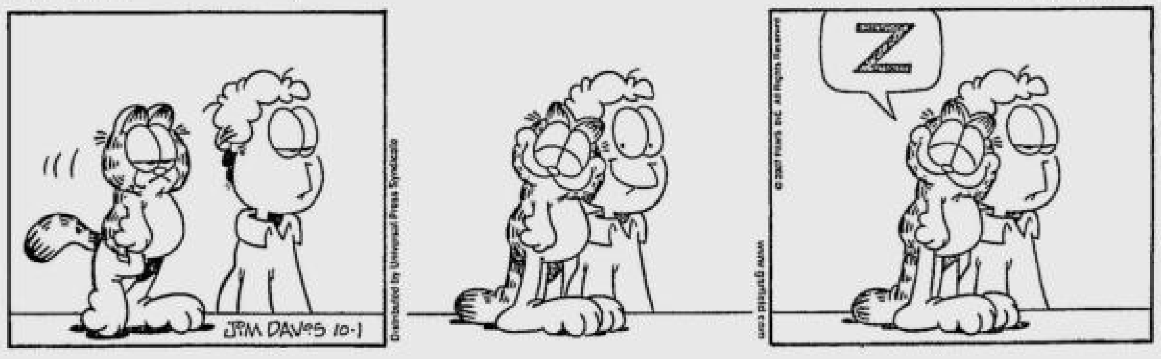
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


JIM DAVIS 10-1
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate
www.garfield.com
Z

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are witty, daring and competitive. You assume leadership in any situation easily. Even though you have strong organizational skills and you're persistent and hardworking, your charm and diplomacy win others to you. Nevertheless, you're surprisingly independent and strong-willed! In the year ahead, your focus will be on partnerships and your closest friendships.

Birthdate of: Julie Andrews, singer/actress; Jimmy Carter, 39th US president; Richard Harris, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your relationships with partners and close friends are important now. That's because the Sun is completely opposite your sign now, and these parts of your life are highlighted.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Do whatever you can to become more efficient at your job and your daily activities. Buy shelving, cleaning supplies, file folders or whatever you need to get better organized at work and at home.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a playful, fun-loving time for you. Enjoy sports, activities with children or anything having to do with show business and the entertainment world.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Home, family and real estate matters are important to you now. Don't ignore these areas in your life. They need your attention.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is not a time to stay at home. Short trips, daily errands, buying and selling, plus increased reading, writing and studying, all demand your time.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're very keen to earn money now, as well as spend it. Cash flow and possessions are definitely on your mind. Perhaps you're contemplating a major purchase.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Remember that the Sun is still in your sign, giving you extra energy and optimism. Now is the time to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. It's all about you, dear Libra.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Try to take a back-seat position right now. Play it low-key. This is the time to think about how you want your new year to unfold. (When your birthday arrives.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Enjoy your increased popularity! Accept all invitations. Friends and groups all want to see your face. Talk about your goals and dreams for the future with others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The Sun is still at high noon in your chart, acting like a spotlight on you. Because others notice you now, make the most of this. People easily respect you now!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Try to satisfy your need for adventure and thrills. You want more out of life. But most especially, you want to learn something new.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel quite intense about almost everything right now. However, it's a good time to discuss how to deal with shared property, inheritances and anything that is jointly held.

The Mother of all icons

the Spaniards believing the enemy had retreated. But on Sept. 15, three Dutch warships closed in on a poorly armed, unescorted galleon ship which, however, managed to fire back and evade capture, retreating to Mariveles.

The fifth and final battle took place at the mouth of Manila Bay, near Corregidor, on Oct. 4. And "the fight was fierce and bloody and lasted some four hours. Yet despite the superiority in arms of the enemy, they were badly battered by the lone Philippine ship" (Hornedo).

Pilgrimage

The battle of La Naval was over, and the officers and men of the Philippine armada fulfilled their vow by making a pilgrimage—barefoot—to the shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary (Nuestra Señora del Rosario) at Santo Domingo Church in the Walled City.

As Ramon N. Villegas puts it, "When powerful men within their walls were at odds, Our Lady was brought out in procession to calm the chaos; when armies bent on war were without, the besieged beseeched her to intercede for them with her Son; when fire threatened to consume or earthquake shook their world, rosaries were to be found in the hands of Filipinos, supplicants all to the Divine Will."

Jewels, saints

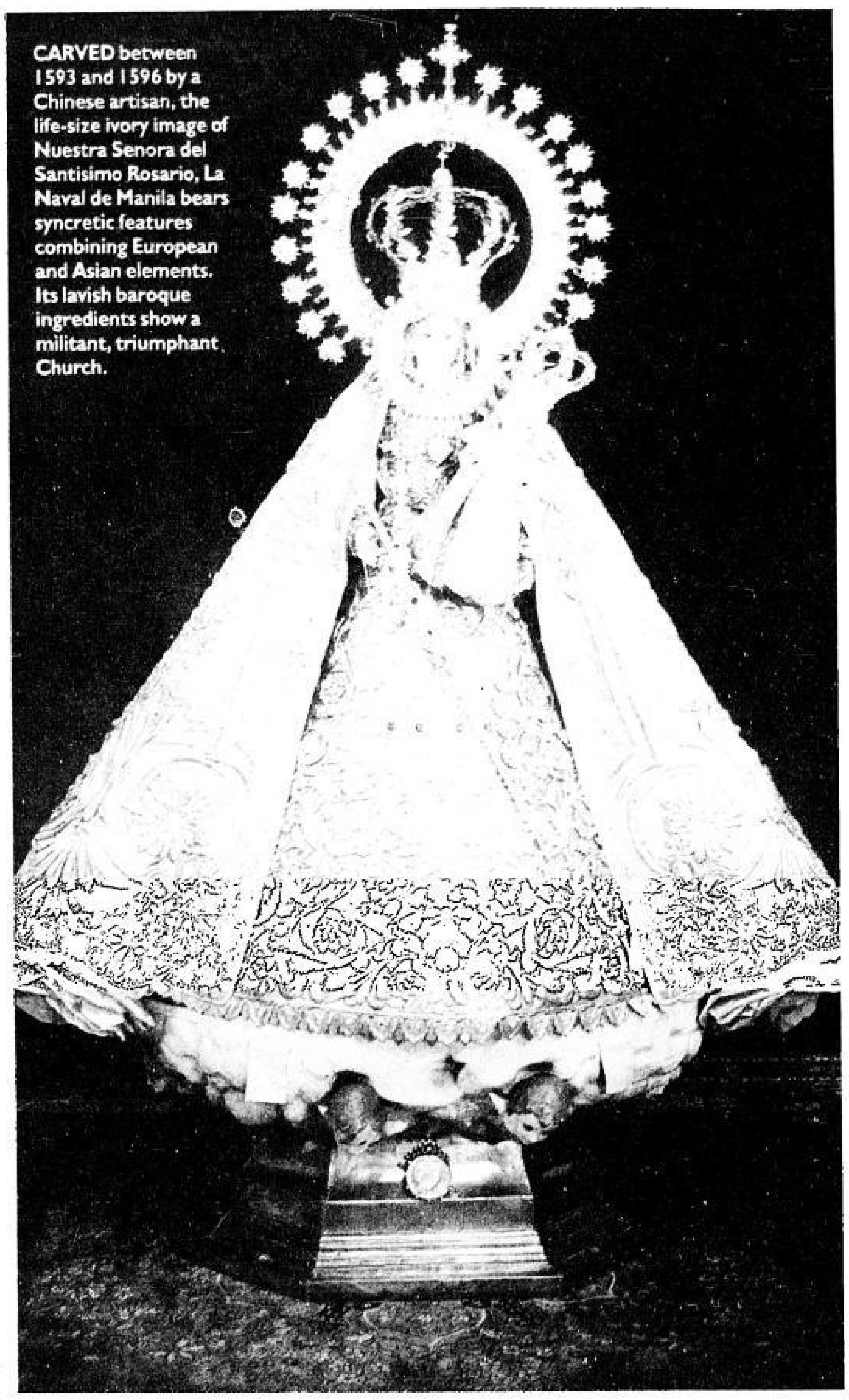
However, Our Lady—specifically her jewels—has attracted not only devotion but greed as well. A report from a Jesuit, Fr. Juan Lopez, in 1638 states that "...about two thousand pesos worth jewels were stolen in Manila from the Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Santo Domingo (church). But the thief (who was a Spaniard) was discovered, and most of it was recovered."

Many jewels have been added to the collection but today, according to Villegas, there are real as well as fake diamonds: "While we cannot fault the intentions of some devotees over the past two centuries, it is somehow in bad taste to make Our Lady wear fake diamonds mixed with precious stones, like some of her social-climbing devotees do."

Regalado Trota José writes about the pantheon of Dominican saints in the procession of La Naval from the 1850s up. And there are many dear to the hearts of Filipinos, like San José (St. Joseph, spouse of Mother Mary), San Lorenzo Ruiz, San Martin de Porres, Santa Rosa de Lima, San Vicente Ferrer, Santa Catalina de Siena, Santo Domingo de Guzman, and Santo Tomás de Aquino.

From the Asian mainland comes Santo Tomás Khuong and San Vicente Liem de la Paz, both Vietnamese, and Santa Magdalena de Nagasaki, Japan.

If the theft of her jewels was a low point for Our Lady, a high point was her being crowned by the Triune God (the Holy Trinity) on Aug. 15, 1867, with the last construction of the Dominican church in Manila. A similar altarpiece was installed in the Vigan Cathedral, Ilocos Sur, on July 2, 1892.


CARVED between 1593 and 1596 by a Chinese artisan, the life-size ivory image of Nuestra Senora del Santisimo Rosario, La Naval de Manila bears syncretic features combining European and Asian elements. Its lavish baroque ingredients show a militant, triumphant Church.

THE CROWNS of La Naval and El Nino

MONSIGNOR Ambrosio Agius, OSB, apostolic delegate to Manila. He crowned La Naval in behalf of Pope Pius X.

British sacrilege

The theft of jewels was nothing compared to the abuse Our Lady of the Rosary and her Son suffered at the hands of British and Indian troops during the British Invasion of 1862. The rampaging soldiers of the Crown decapitated the sacred image, yanked off the arms of the Baby Jesus, and made off with precious stones.

The British did not leave until April 1764, when the Dominicans celebrated a thanksgiving Mass. "Fray Zurita, who delivered the sermon on that occasion, glorified Our Lady and her Son for taking on themselves all the injuries and sacrilege committed by the British as a painful lesson for the city," says Trota José.

The latter notes that the crescent moon at the feet of Our Lady symbolizes the Immaculate Conception. The moon receives its light from the sun. ("a Woman Clothed with the Sun"), while the stars allude to the Daughter of Sion over Israel and the Twelve Tribes (or twelve Apostles) of the Church.

This book incorporates many other components and features associated with Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Naval (the latter title added after the naval battles of 1646), including Our Lady's choirboys, the Tiples de Santo Domingo; La Naval fiestas in Pampanga; other venerated images in Dominican shrines in the Philippines; a feature on Nick Joaquin, that faithful chronicler of La Naval de Manila, and La Naval sacred music.

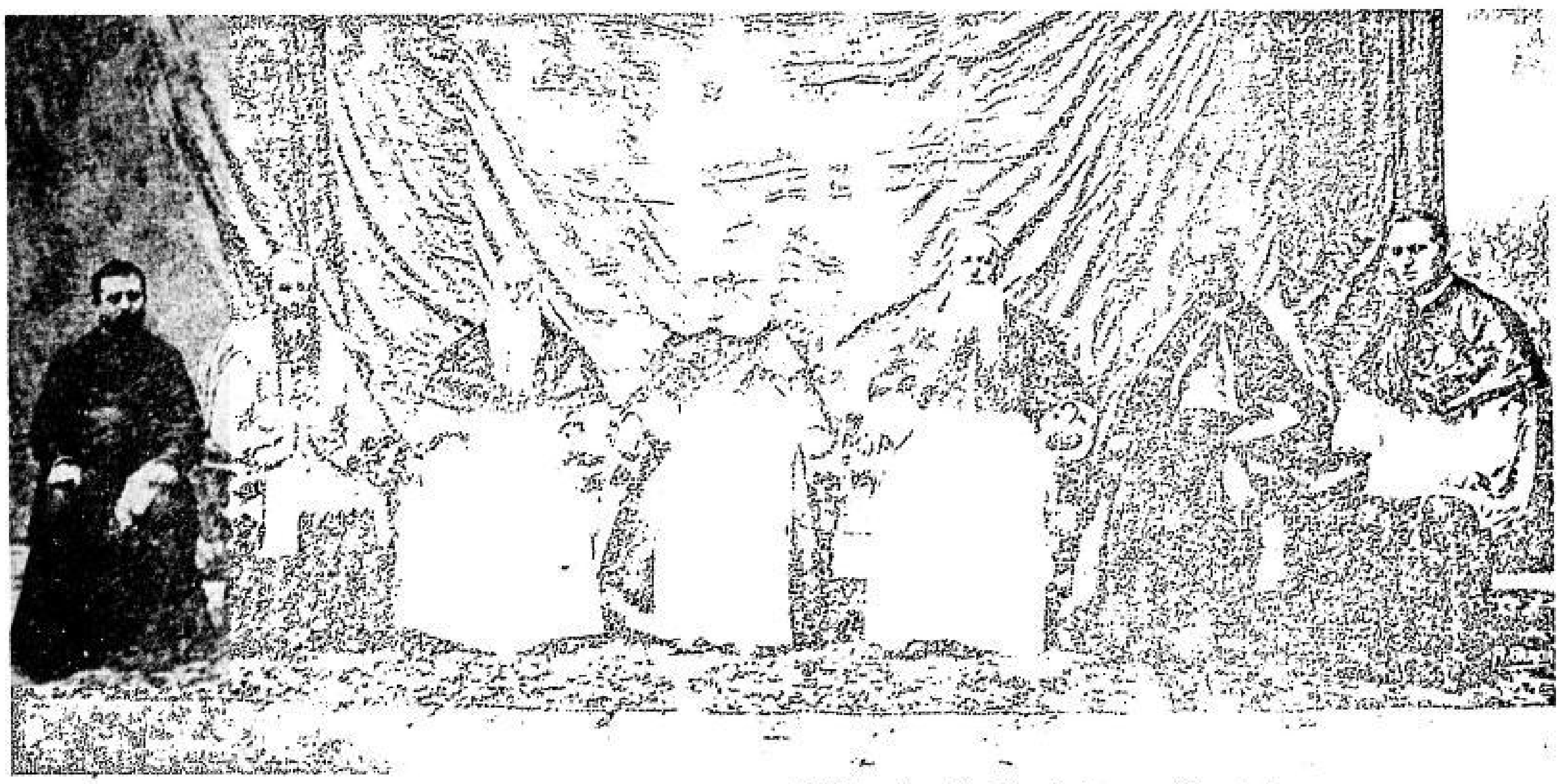
'Despedida'

Regarding the latter, Julie Ann A. Hidalgo says that "easily the most awaited and admired song" is *Despedida a la Virgen* by "P. Hernandez," or perhaps he was also known as D. Leandro Hernandez. Unfortunately, nothing is known about the composer, although the music sheet is still extant.

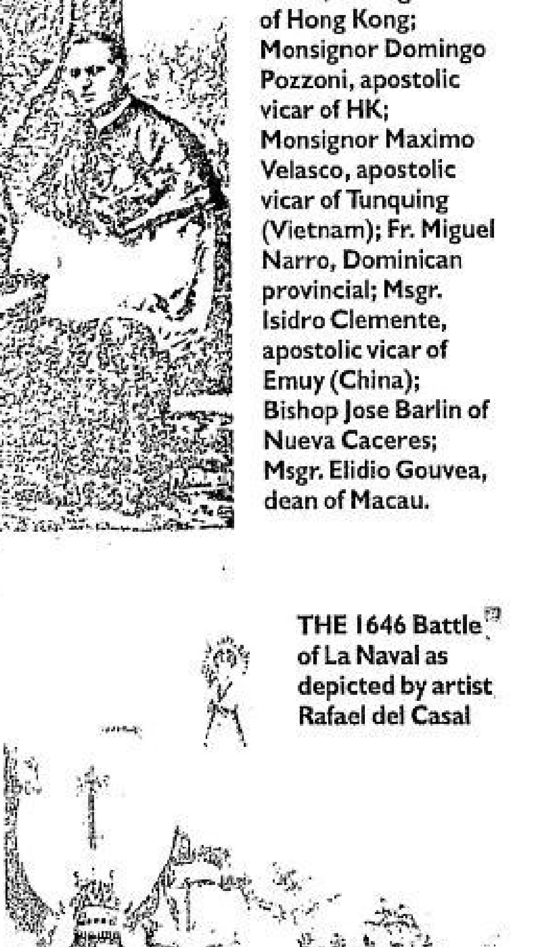
As for the hymn itself, Nick Joaquin once described it as "a haunting song... that once heard, is not to be forgotten."

The icon of La Naval is sacred art, sacred and secular history, and sociological and spirtual phenomenon all together. During the most critical points of Philippine history, La

THE MOTHER/ E4


THE 1907 canonical coronation of La Naval drew Asian church dignitaries to Manila: Fr. Pedro Maria, vicar-general of Hong Kong; Monsignor Domingo Pozzoni, apostolic vicar of HK; Monsignor Maximo Velasco, apostolic vicar of Tunquing (Vietnam); Fr. Miguel Narro, Dominican provincial; Msgr. Isidro Clemente, apostolic vicar of Emuy (China); Bishop Jose Barlin of Nueva Caceres; Msgr. Elidio Gouvea, dean of Macau.

THE LAST Santo Domingo Church in Intramuros, where La Naval was enshrined until the Japanese invasion in 1941.


THE 1646 Battle of La Naval as depicted by artist Rafael del Casal

M. R. P. Fr. Santiago Payá, Postulador de la Coronacion
DOMINICAN Father Santiago Paya, postulator for the canonical coronation.

The Mother of all icons

From page E3

Naval was there—when Ninoy Aquino was assassinated and his bloody remains lay in wake at Santo Domingo Church in 1983, and when the masses went to Edsa in the 1986 revolution (the image was brought there, to give courage to the freedom fighters).

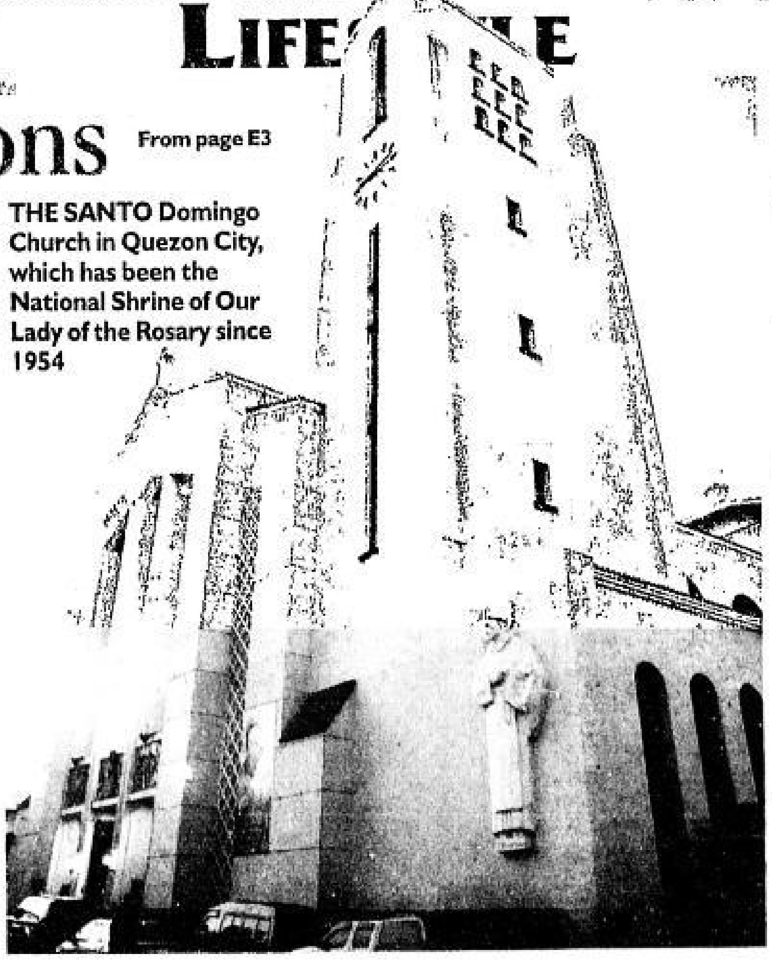
Symbol of Pinoy's best

Fr. Rolando V. de la Rosa, OP, the acting rector of UST and former chairman of the Commission on Higher Education, emphasizes the relevance of La Naval in an essay in the book:

"This miraculous image reminds us that heroism will never die among Filipinos despite the doomsday prediction of modern prophets that we Filipinos, because of our damaged culture, have a tendency to self-destruct... This image is the symbol of what is good in our character as a people, what is true in our culture, what is powerful in our faith. If we can display this image in all its grandeur, why can we not exhibit the best in each of us for all the world to see?"

Edited by INQUIRER arts and culture editor Lito B. Zulueta, this book is of interest not only to Marian devotees but to students of history as well. It is long, lovingly detailed, richly illustrated, and meticulously researched and written by specialists in their field.

"The Saga of La Naval: Triumph of a People's Faith" will be launched on Oct. 7, 1:30 p.m., at the Santo Domingo Church. For book orders and details of the activities to mark the Centennial of the Canonical Coronation of La Naval this month, call 7126271-72.



THE SANTO Domingo Church in Quezon City, which has been the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary since 1954

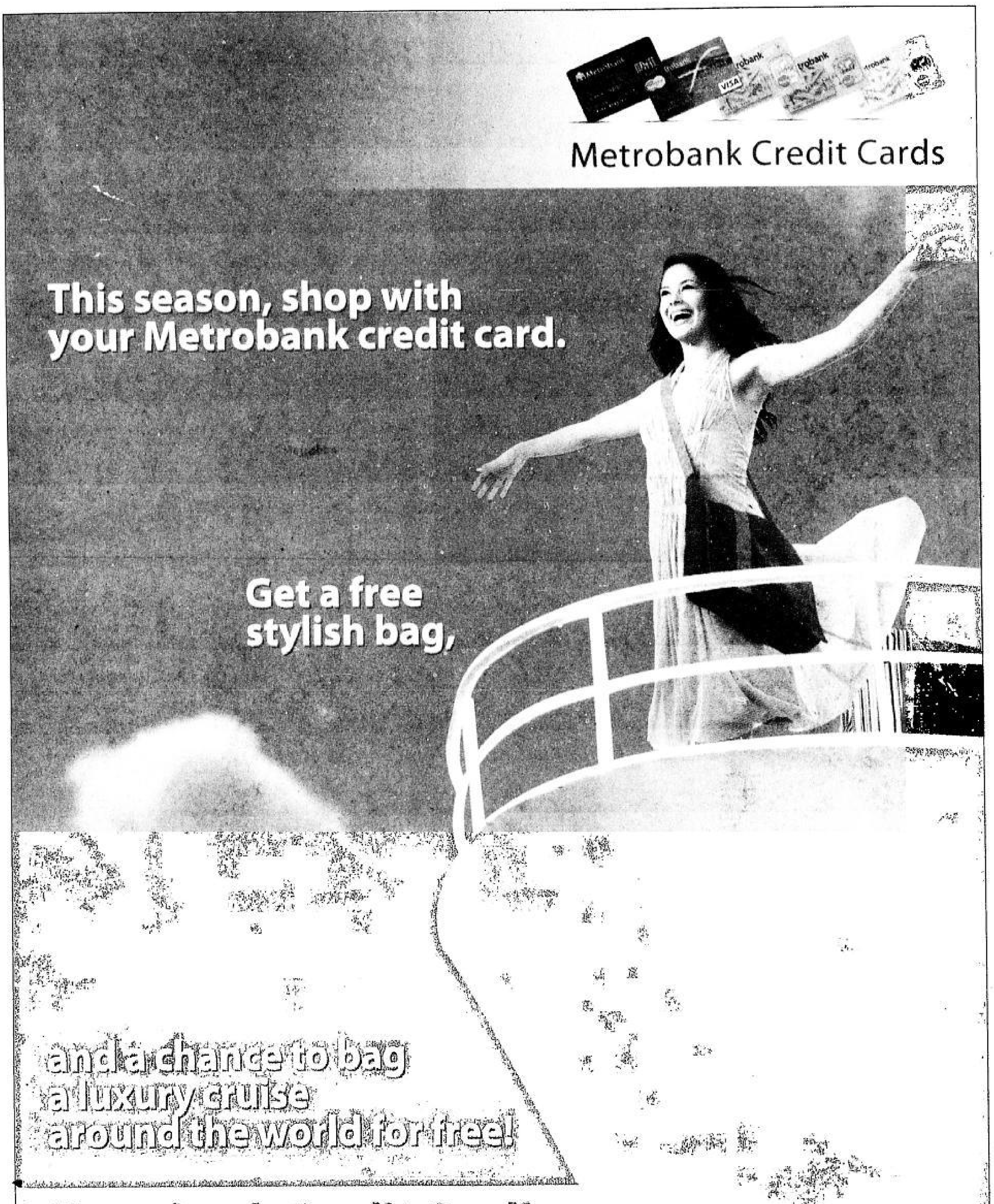
Photo auction for cancer cause

BY MIGUEL Fabie III

AS PART OF THE CANCER Institute Foundation's campaign on cervical cancer prevention, a photo auction will be held on Oct. 6, 6 p.m. at Silverlens Gallery (Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati).

To be auctioned off are photographs by Jo Avila, Bahaghari, Miguel Fabie III, Ronnie Lazaro, Jun de Leon, Isa Lorenzo, At Maculangan, Billy Mondonedo, Emmanuel Santos, Ivan Sarenas, John Silva, Pilar Tuason, Wig Tysmans, Lilen Uy, Jake Versoza and Denise Weldon, and an etching by National Artist Benedicto Cabrera.

Proceeds will support the Cervical Cancer Prevention Program. Call 8160044.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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde
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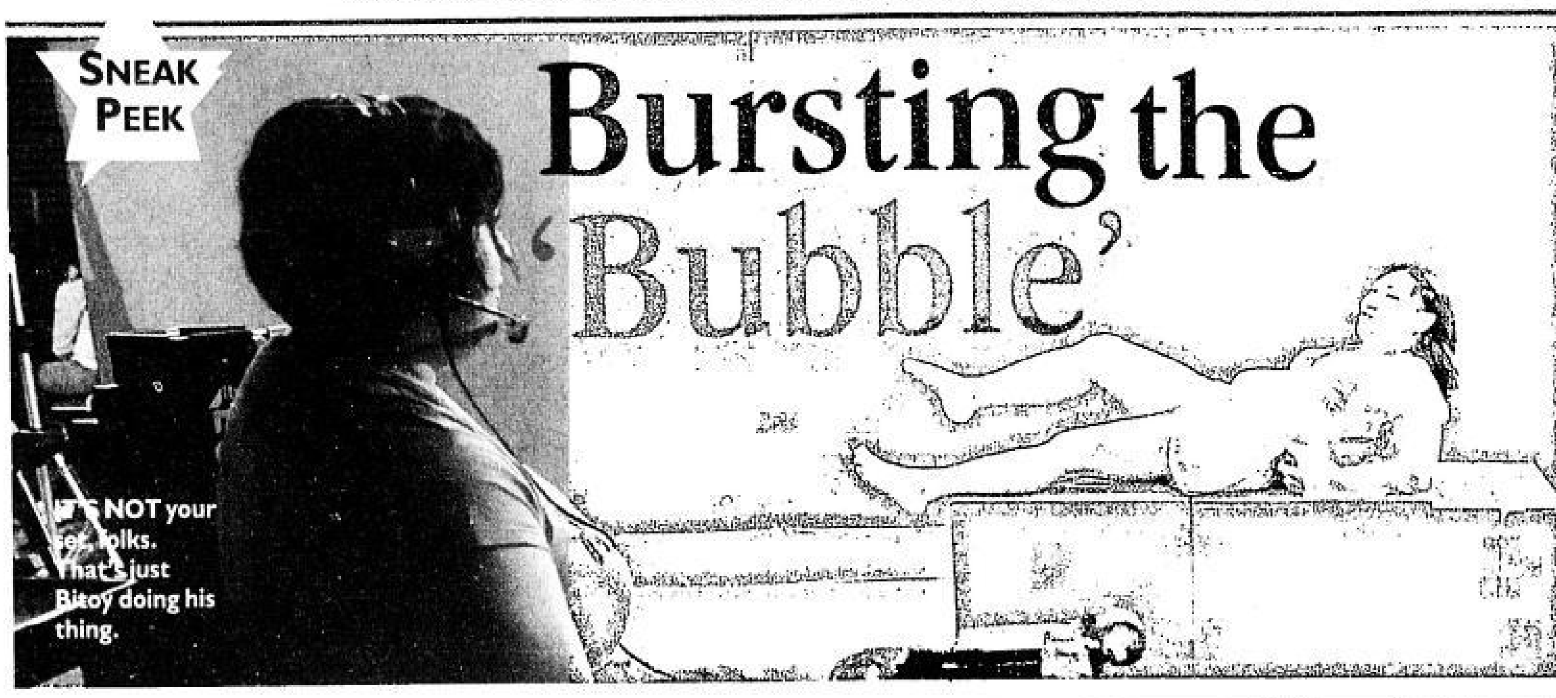
SNEAK PEEK



Bursting the 'Bubble'

IT'S NOT your set, folks. That's just Bitoy doing his thing.

Cast and crew of long-running gag show take comedy seriously

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

Dressed in matching tankinis, Michael V. and Ogie Alcasid prepare to parody a TV commercial starring Judy Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo.

Bitoy (as Michael is known in show biz) shares with Ogie some ideas on how to cap the sketch, deftly slipping into a jazz routine to stress a point.

Ogie takes it all in, wordlessly. But when the camera starts grinding, both he and Michael are transformed into 1970s dance duo Aldeguer Sisters!

Welcome to a typical working day on the set of GMA 7's "Bubble Gang."

* * *

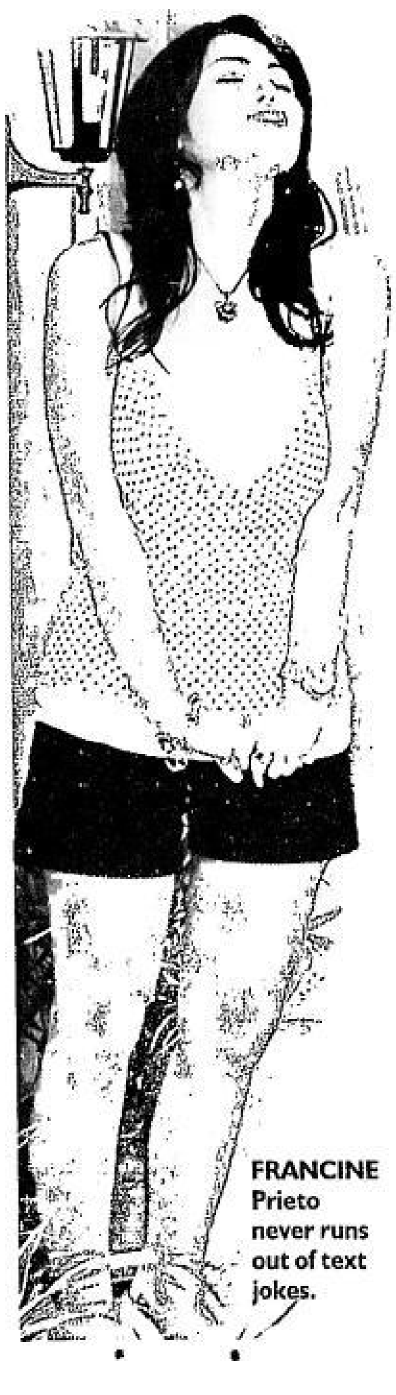
"Bitoy and Ogie [work perfectly together] because they never upstage one another," co-star Rufa Mae Quinto explains the secret of the gag show that's celebrating its 12th anniversary this month. "There's give-and-take."

Ogie agrees: "For us, what is important is the scene, not our personal triumphs as comedians. In any case, roles are distributed well."

Egos are set aside—if not altogether shredded to bits. He thinks nothing of being Panchito to Bitoy's Dolphy.

OGIE doesn't mind being Panchito to Bitoy's Dolphy.

ARA thinks nothing of being deglamorized in the name of comedy.



FRANCINE Prieto never runs out of text jokes.

Bitoy, who is also the show's creative director, quotes British comic Matt Lucas of "Little Britain" fame: "There's no vanity in comedy." To illustrate, he says, "If you have to look ugly to make people laugh ... so be it."

Even the female cast members, all sexy stars, are routinely deglamorized.

Co-star Ara Mina points out that she often plays mom to Ogie and Bitoy here—something she wouldn't do just now on the big screen. On occasion, she has even donned a gray wig as Armida Siguion-Reyna.

Ogie recalls that when he first dressed in drag as the Pia Guanio clone, Papaya Guano, he looked like a gorilla. "Regine (Velasquez, his girlfriend) said we should work harder on my makeup," Ogie recounts.

He admits that the objects of their spoofs are not stingy with feedback. "Pia texted me one night: *'Mga walanghiya kayo!'* [You're shameless!]"

Bitoy relates that Mike Enriquez, Pia's co-anchor on the newscast "24 Oras," offered constructive criticism for his Michael Ricketts character. "He wanted me to copy everything about him."

Rufa Mae says Mel Tiangco isn't offended by her Bel Tiongco act. "Tita Mel greeted me on my birthday last year on 'SOP.'"

She watches all of Mel's shows, Rufa Mae brags. "I used to have a

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2

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 DOLBY 1408
2 KIROT SA DIBDIB
3 LIBERATED
4 DTS SHOOT THEM UP

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 DOLBY RISE
2 KIRIDA
3 DTS IVE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 TUKSO SI CHARITO
5 SHOOT THEM UP

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 PILYA
2 DAY WATCH
3 I KNOW WHO KILL ME
4 DISTURBIA

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 PLEASE CALL
2

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3 • THX
12:30 2:45 5:00 7:15 9:30

2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

4 NO RESERVATION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 ANG LALAKE sa PAROLA
12:49 2:30 4:20 6:10 8:00 9:50

6 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 THE BRAVE ONE
1:50 4:35 7:20 10:00

8 indieSine: GULONG
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

9 SHOOT 'EM UP
1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 9:40

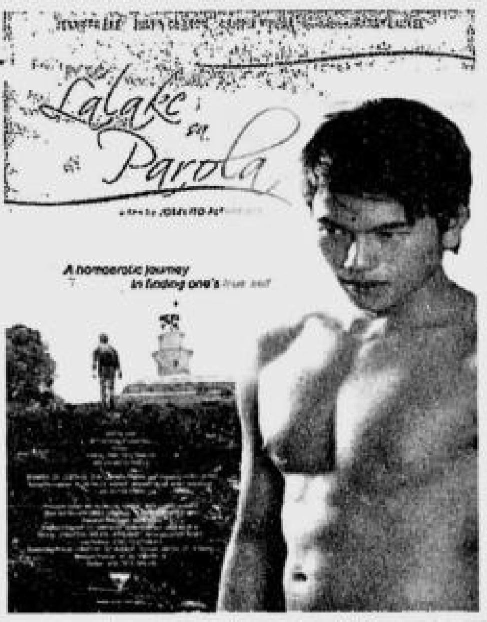
10 ROGUE ASSASSIN
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

exclusive screening
at Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA

Starring:
Harry Laurel, Justin de Leon, Jennifer Lee, Sheree and Allan Paule

According to folklore, the fairy of the lighthouse shows herself every full moon to the man her heart desires. When this man succumbs to the fairy's charms and makes love to her, he will never long for any other woman. Woven into this legend is the story of Mateo (Harry Laurel), a lighthouse caretaker. Jerome (Justin de Leon), a gay man from the city finds himself deeply attracted to this simple yet seductive man upon meeting him. Soon, Mateo finds himself entering a subtle homoerotic journey with his newfound friend, while Suzet (Jennifer Lee), his girlfriend, continues to struggle for his love and attention. Will Mateo bravely cross the thin line between being straight and being gay in the midst of his conservative rural community?

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB Rating: R18


Lalake sa Parola
A homoerotic journey in finding one's true self

GRADED B by the Cinema Evaluation Board

ERMITA

1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

2 SHOOT 'EM UP
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 RESIDENT EVIL 3
10:10 12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00

4 RESIDENT EVIL 3
12:00 2:25 4:50 7:10 9:25

5 NO RESERVATION
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

6 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

THE ... TO WIN
PACQUIAO BARRERA II
SOLAR ALL ACCESS

WATCH LIVE via SATELLITE GALLERIA • MANILA • METRO EAST •

OCTOBER 7 • Sunday • 8:00AM

FREE hotdog, popcorn and drink for every ticket purchased

TICKETS are available at the ticket booth

TICKET PRICE: P600 (Galleria & Ermita P500 (Metro East)

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
1:00 3:35 6:15 9:00

2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11:25 1:50 4:10 6:40 9:05

4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME 11:20, 1:40
RESIDENT EVIL 3 4:00 6:20 8:40

5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00

6 THE BRAVE ONE
1:10 3:40 6:20 9:00

7 NO RESERVATION
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

8 SHOOT 'EM UP
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

NOVALICHES

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 NO RESERVATION
3 SHOOT 'EM UP
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

PIONEER

1 NO RESERVATION
1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40

2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
11:40 1:55 4:10 6:25 8:40

3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:45

4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
1:15 3:45 6:15 8:45

STA. ROSA

(049) 837-0907

1 THE LAST LEGION
2 NANCY DREW
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

LIPA

1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 DAYWATCH
4 DISTURBIA

DASMARINAS

1 DISTURBIA
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 RESIDENT EVIL 3
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

IMUS

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 THE HOST
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

ANGELES

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 SKINWALKERS
4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY

TARLAC

1 THE INVASION
2 A LOVE STORY
3 1408

STARMILLS

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 SKINWALKERS
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 THE BRAVE ONE

BACOLOD

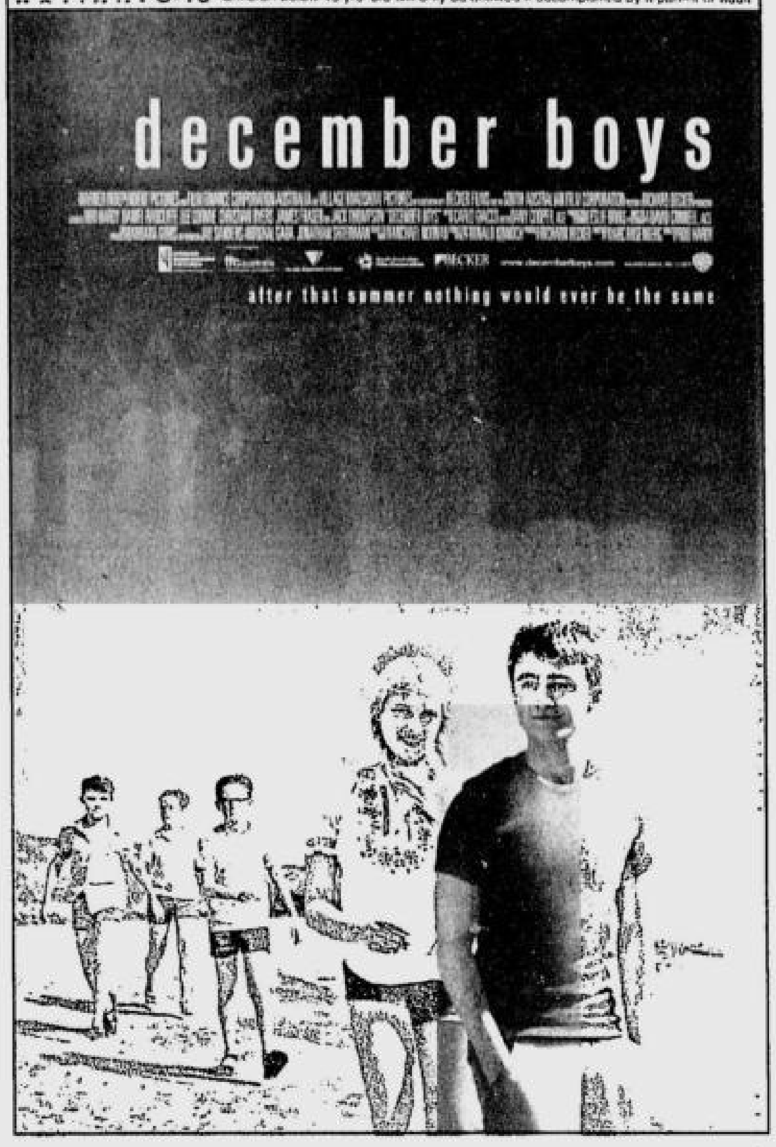
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 NANCY DREW
4 DISTURBIA
5 WAITRESS
6 LIGAW LIHAM

ILOILO

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 UNDERDOG
5 SKINWALKERS
6 STOMP THE YARD

OPENS OCTOBER 3

MTRCB PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


december boys
after that summer nothing would ever be the same

OPENS WEDNESDAY

KATIE AND ANDERSON ARE GETTING MARRIED... THEY JUST MET A FEW MINUTES AGO

JASON BIGGS
ISLA FISHER
WEDDING DAZE

Controversial gay film back

LOS ANGELES—AMERICA IN 1980 was a culture confronting itself. Conservative Ronald Reagan was elected president strongly supporting family values, while at the box office "Cruising" hoped to lure mainstream audiences into seeing a movie featuring graphic gay sex.

NOW ON DISC

Twenty-seven years later, porn films of almost every stripe are easily available. But "Cruising," about a serial killer haunting New York gay bars and S&M joints, seems to have vanished in the intervening years.

It was a box office flop but drew protests from gay groups, instead of the expected support, and its star, Al Pacino, who plays a straight cop investigating the murders by posing as a gay man, seldom talks about it.

Now the film is hoping for a second life—it is out on DVD after a re-release in theaters in a handful of major cities, and is being heavily touted by director William Friedkin, of "The French Connection" and "The Exorcist" fame.

In a recent discussion, Friedkin said he was still shocked at the backlash he received while filming in New York City.

"I was amazed at the violent response. It got so bad that we literally gave the crew the call sheets at the last possible moment and reminded them every day not to tell anyone where we'd be shooting," Friedkin said. "For example, we had an early morning shoot on an isolated street featuring Pacino being approached by a gay man he's met earlier in the evening who may or may not be the killer of several gay victims in the East Village," Friedkin said. "Suddenly hundreds of protesters showed up at 3 a.m. throwing rocks and shouting threats at us."

Pacino has said Friedkin kept him out of the loop when they were making "Cruising."

"Am I the killer at the end of the picture or have I gone gay? To this day I don't know because Friedkin never told me how to play my final scene," Pacino said recently. *Reuters*

STOMP THE YARD

'Stomp the Yard'

"STOMP THE YARD," NOW available on VCDs and DVDs (Magnavision), follows the story of DJ (Columbus Short), a troubled youth who finds solace in joining a fraternity where he finds use for his street-style dance moves.

Throughout his journey, he learns how to deal with his own troubled past and understands the true meaning of brotherhood.

Meagan Good also star.

SHANG CINEPLEX

① NO RESERVATIONS
MTRCB: GP
2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

② RESIDENT EVIL 3
MTRCB: R-13 12:20, 2:45
5:10, 7:35, 10:00

③ I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK and LARRY
MTRCB: R-13
12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

④ I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
MTRCB: GP
2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

PREMIERE THEATRE
THE BRAVE ONE
(R-13) 1:15, 3:50, 6:25, 9:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

The Most Awaited Fight is On!
The Will to Win "PACQUIAO vs BARRERA"
Super Featherweight Championship
on OCTOBER 7, 2007 (SUNDAY) - 8:00 AM (MANILA TIME)
Live Via Satellite from
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
Cinema Gates Open at 7:00 AM - Ticket Price : P 600.00

6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227
for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

POWER PLANT CINEMA

ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

I ' VE FALLEN FOR YOU G 1:30,3:40,5:50,8:00	RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION R13 1:50,4:00,6:10, 8:20,10:30	I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY - R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30
NO RESERVATIONS G 1:35,3:55,6:15,8:35	SHOOT 'EM UP R13 2:00,4:00,6:00,8:00	NO RESERVATIONS G 1:05,3:25,5:45, 8:05,10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40
6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35
GP

CINEMA 2 RESIDENT EVIL
11:30 , 2:05 , 4:40
7:15 , 9:50
R-13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND·EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 RESIDENT EVIL
12:00 , 2:35 , 5:10
7:45 , 10:20
R-13

CINEMA 4 CHUCK & LARRY
12:00 , 2:40 , 5:20
8:00 , 10:35
R-13

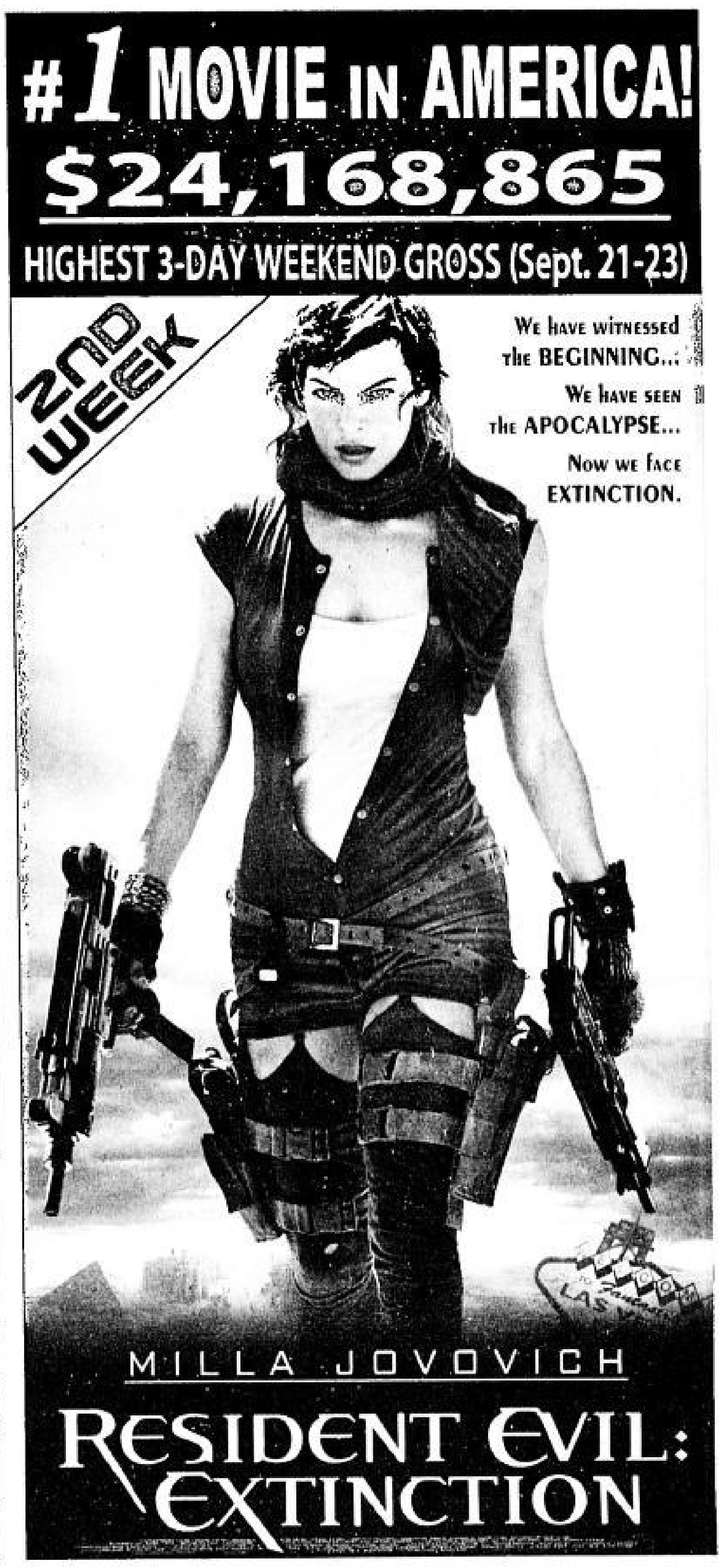
CINEMA 5 NO RESERVATIONS
10:40 , 1:00 , 3:20
5:40 , 8:00 , 10:20
GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM	October 08 & 09, 2007	" Alamat " . Stageplay	[illegible]
	October 12 & 13, 2007	Apo Hiking Society	8:00 PM
TEATRINO	Sep. 27, Oct. 3 , 10, 17, 24, 31	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM
	October 25 , 2007	Ogie Alcasid	8:00 PM
	October 26, 2007	John Lesaca	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

THE WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO vs BARRERA II
OCTOBER 7, 2007 8:00 AM
WATCH IT AT PROMENADE CINEMA
TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE


#1 MOVIE IN AMERICA!
$24,168,865
HIGHEST 3-DAY WEEKEND GROSS (Sept. 21-23)
2ND WEEK
We have witnessed the BEGINNING...
We have seen the APOCALYPSE...
Now we face EXTINCTION.
MILLA JOVOVICH
RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION

AT THE CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS G83 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 NO RESERVATIONS	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
GLORIETTA 4	1 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 JOSHUA	5 UNDERDOG	6 NO RESERVATIONS	7 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
GREENBELT 1	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX NO RESERVATIONS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 JOSHUA GUARANTEED SEATS	4 UNDERDOG / SHOOT 'EM UP GUARANTEED SEATS	5 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 NO RESERVATIONS		
	3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 ROGUE ASSASIN	5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	3 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	4 THE BRAVE ONE
MARKET! MARKET!	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 NO RESERVATIONS		
	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 ROGUE ASSASIN	3 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY GUARANTEED SEATS	4 NO RESERVATIONS GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 SHOOT 'EM UP	6 UNDERDOG / THE BRAVE ONE	7 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS	

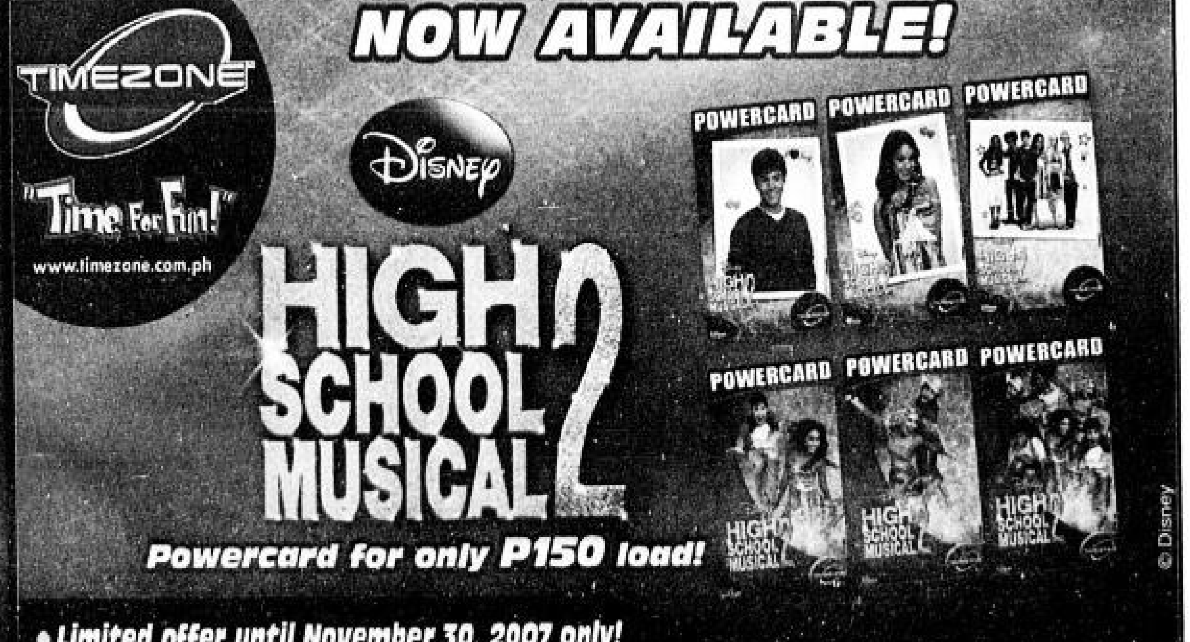
AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala Malls

glorietta	BPI Appliance Madness September 26 to October 16 at Glorietta Activity Center
GREENBELT	Jazz Nights September 26, 2007 at the Greenbelt 2 Al Fresco
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Town Cheers Competition September 22 & 23, 2007 at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 pm; OnStage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	Toyota Showcase September 28 to 30, 2007; at the Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST September 15 - October 7, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	FORMS & SPACES: An Exhibition by MAIA & Aaron Bautista September 10 to 27, 2007; ArtistSpace For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Mother Care Exhibit September 16 to 30; 10 am to 9 pm; Restoration Area, Level 3

EXCLUSIVE GUARANTEED VIEWING PLEASURE
Opens October 3 at Glorietta 4 & Greenbel 3 Cinemas
FROM THE CREATOR OF "TRAINING DAY" & "THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS"
CHRISTIAN BALE FREDDIE RODRIGUEZ EVA LONGORIA
"An Amazing performance, one of the best of the year..."
— Brian Tallerico, UGO
Harsh Times
TAKE A RIDE TO THE EDGE.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)
Special thanks to veteransbank
VIVA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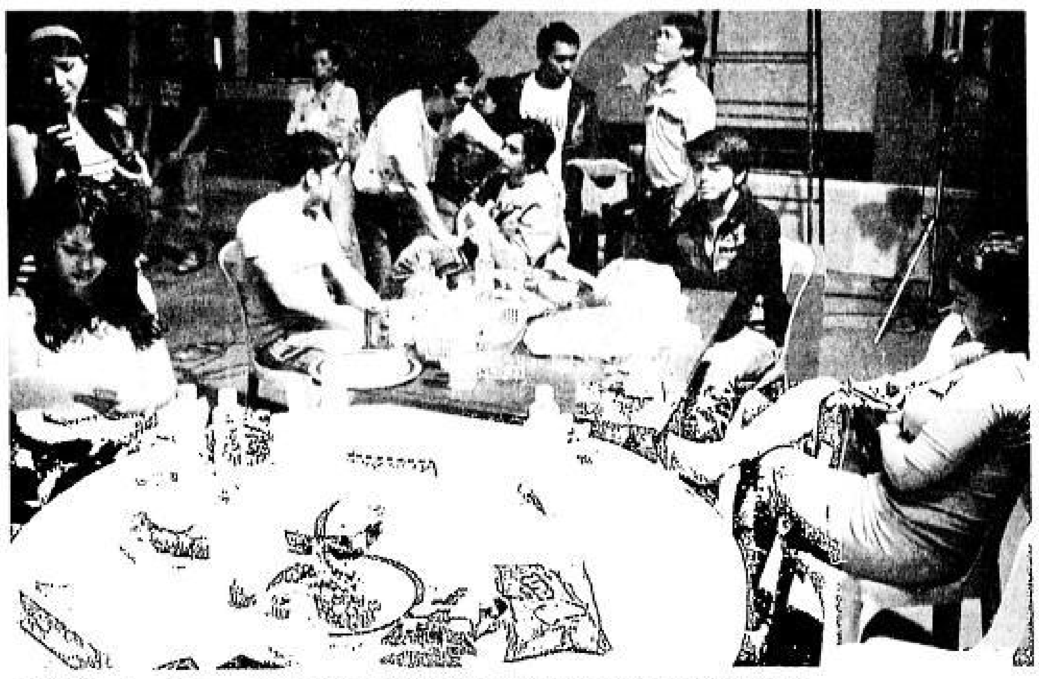
Powercard for only P150 load!
© Disney
• Limited offer until November 30, 2007 only!
• Collectible! Non-reloadable!
glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

ANTONIO Aquitania and Wendell Ramos pass the time by singing and reading. Far right, Maureen Larrazabal acts as Bitoy's body double in a skit.



JUNK foods galore—especially useful for marathon meetings and tapings.

SUFFERING for their art: Ogie and Bitoy get made up as Papaya Guano and Michael Ricketts, respectively.

DIANA Zubiri surfs the Net between takes.

Bursting. . .

From page F1

sketch called 'Magpa K Man Lang.'"

Clearly, there are no sacred cows for the "Bubble" crew.

Cast members don't fret when they become targets, Ogie insists. "Sometimes, on 'Chaka Minute,' I joke about myself. We hit many people. Why should I be spared?"

Unfunny turns

Not everyone is laughing, though.

Bitoy says at least one celebrity has complained. "[Singer] LA Lopez sued us. Nothing happened to the case."

An advertiser made a fuss.

"We've been doing spoofs of commercials since the early days," Bitoy recalls. "We had to stop for a while after a coffee company complained. But then 'Ispup' on ABC 5 was freely doing ad spoofs [from 2000 to 2004]."

Bitoy and company fought to have the segment back. "We made our ad spoofs bigger and better."

Executive producer Camille Hermoso says "creative independence" is valued on the show.

"Only the creative team decides which commercials will be parodied."

"A sponsor once asked us to spoof its commercial," Bitoy recounts. Naturally, the sponsor interfered in the process. "Lots of punch lines were disapproved. That's why we decided to maintain creative control over our material."

Hermoso says Jet Li's beer commercial has been the most challenging spoof material so far. "It took us almost six hours— to think, the segment's running time was only one minute and thirty seconds."

"That's because we try to copy the material frame by frame every time," Bitoy explains.

Big move

Bitoy and Ogie's tandem first made its mark on the ABC 5 gag show "Tropang Trumpo."

It took a lot of convincing for the duo to make the big move to GMA 7 in 1995, recalls Marivin Arayata, program manager and vice president for Entertainment TV.

"Bitoy was difficult to track down," she remembers.

Apart from the money, it was the prospect of having more "creative control" that attracted Bitoy and Ogie.

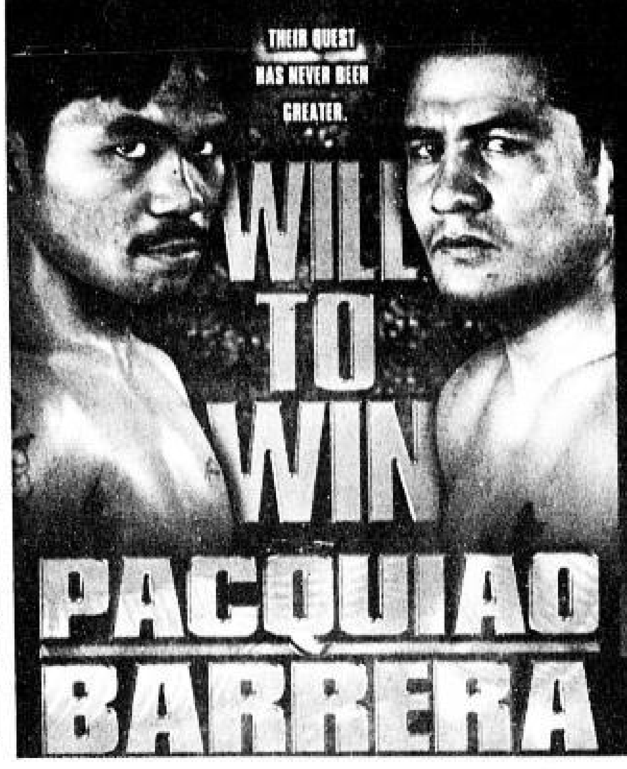
"We were liberated from oppression," Bitoy jests.

Ogie looks back: "I told Bitoy: We've hit the big time. But it was also make-or-break for us—a painful decision."

Adding to the backstage drama, ABS-CBN made a counter-offer.

"*Saling pusa lang kami noon sa ABS-CBN*," Bitoy says. (Apart from the ABC 5 gag show, they had minor hosting gigs at

BURSTING/ F6



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WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO BARRERA

Watch our country's very own Manny Pacquiao collide with Marco Antonio Barrera in a 12-round super featherweight fight on the big screen
October 7 (Sunday)
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BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!
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P 400 (Guaranteed Seats)
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METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
IMAX
DEEP SEA 3D Admission Price: P250
1:00 PM • 2:30 PM • 5:30 PM • 7:00PM • 8:30PM
T-REX 3D Admission Price: P250
4:00 PM
1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 NO RESERVATIONS
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 UNDERDOG
6 THE BRAVE ONE
PREMIERE CINEMA
I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
CENTERSTAGE
RESIDENT EVIL
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
Bookings now accepted. Inquire at 556-2314.
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
RESIDENT EVIL
CINEMA 2
NO RESERVATION
For ticket reservations, dial 6338976
All major credit cards accepted

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 NO RESERVATIONS
4 RESIDENT EVIL
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 RESIDENT EVIL
7 NO RESERVATIONS
8 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
9 UNDERDOG
10 1408
11 SHOOT EM' UP
12 RUSH HOUR 3

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 RESIDENT EVIL
5 THE BRAVE ONE
6 NO RESERVATION
7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
8 1408
9 RESIDENT EVIL
10 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11 SHOOT EM' UP
12 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 UNDERDOG
2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 A LOVE STORY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 1408
6 SHOOT EM' UP
7 RESIDENT EVIL
8 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
9 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
10 RESIDENT EVIL
11 NO RESERVATION
12 THE BRAVE ONE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 NO RESERVATION
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 THE BRAVE ONE
7 SHOOT EM' UP
8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
9 1408
10 UNDERDOG

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 1408/CARTOON NETWORK
5 NO RESERVATION
6 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6868
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 NO RESERVATION
6 RESERVED
7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
8 SHOOT EM' UP
9 UNDERDOG

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 NO RESERVATION
6 RESIDENT EVIL
7 1408
8 DISTURBIA
9 THE BRAVE ONE
10 RUSH HOUR 3
11 UNDERDOG
12 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 RESIDENT EVIL/DISTURBIA

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 UNDERDOG
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 THE HOST
7 RESIDENT EVIL
8 SHOOT EM' UP

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOhU
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 SKINWALKERS

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4 NANCY DREW

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2 RESERVED
3 SKINWALKERS
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5 THE BRAVE ONE
6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
7 RESERVED
8 THE LAST LEGION

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
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7 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
8 RESIDENT EVIL

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1:35, 3:40, 6:15, 8:40, 11:00
R-13
3 NO RESERVATIONS
3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00
G
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2:05, 4:35, 7:05, 9:50
G

Gulong
A FILM BY SOCKIE FERNANDEZ
GULONG is about friendship, love and life. The story is told from the point-of-view of Apao, a smart, kindhearted boy whose quest for an old bicycle reveals the stuff he is made of. With him on this adventure are his insan Momoy and his best friend Tom-Tom. The story begins with a question: How are our 3 friends going to spend their summer vacation? Tom-Tom suggests that they go to his uncle's fishpond, an hour bike ride from where they live. Apao and Momoy have a problem as they don't own a bike! There are no jeeps and it is too far to walk. Momoy finds an old bicycle but, the owner, an old woman named Tita Maggie, will only give it to him if he pays her a hundred pesos. He agrees and promises to come back with the money the next day. This starts a series of events which affects Apao, his friends, his family and even his community. In the end, a discarded 40-year old bicycle connects the past to present and becomes a catalyst for healing old wounds and reviving a love affair that has long been left for dead
MTRCB Rating: G
Watch this only at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
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INDIESINE

Learning from others to improve local show biz

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ON THE LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT scene, there's a lot of room for improvement. But what changes should be put in effect, and how? To answer this question, we can follow the example set by show biz organizations elsewhere:

For instance, local entertainment awards rites are often dampened by the absence of many awardees, who fail to make it to awards ceremonies for one reason or other. How to put an end to these embarrassing snubs?

Why don't we do things the Emmy way? At the recent Emmy Awards, **Ricky Gervais** was declared Best Actor in a Comedy Series but since he wasn't present, the award was given to **Steve Carell**!

Gervais was the lone absentee. Other nominees knew that the Emmy Awards group enforced its rules, and nobody else wanted to forfeit his or her victory.

Perhaps local awards groups could impose the same rule of "no show, no award." That would make nominees give awards the importance and respect they by rights should have.

Still on the subject of show biz awards, have you noticed how much they've increased in the past decade? This is ironic, since during this same period, local film production drastically went down, and the quality of movies produced similarly dipped.

So, we now have the disheartening situation of "too few films, too many awards"! How to rationalize this irrational situation?

Media outlets abroad handle similar situations by evaluating the awards groups involved, and rating them according to relative objectivity and credibility.

In other words, they give maximum coverage to the most credible awards, and give short shrift to the tainted honors, thus minimizing their impact on the public. Can local media outlets be as astute and refuse to publicize the dubious awards we have?

This is an important consideration, because awards are supposed to set standards, and hokey awards provide wrong and even harmful touchstones for industry people and the listening and viewing public to look up to.

It's terribly galling when mediocre artists boast of the awards they've gotten, dubious though they may be, and the clueless public looks up to them as outstanding practitioners of various media crafts or performing arts!

A third area that cries out for improvement is the unauthorized "cannibalization" of films by documentaries and other TV shows, to illustrate whatever those programs want to dramatize.

In other countries, this can't happen, because productions are strongly protected by copyright laws that are strictly enforced.

Here, enforcement is generally lax, so TV people have little compunction about giving movies the "chop-chop" treatment, excising only the bits and pieces that suit their purposes, sometimes without permission from the butchered movies' producers.

This is a lazy way to make a documentary or other TV show, so erring TV people should be chastised for it. More, they should be charged for copyright violation and slapped with the appropriate penalties, to dissuade other "cannibals" from being so cavalier and ignorant of the rights of authors and producers.

On National Geographic Channel

Oct. 3 at 9 p.m., "Situation Critical: Downed Pilot." Oct. 4 at 9 a.m., "Megacities: Taipei." Oct. 10 at 9 p.m., "Situation Critical: Hell on High Water (disaster at the 54th Sydney to Hobart yacht race). Oct. 11 at 9 p.m., "Ancient Megastructures: The Egyptian Pyramids." Oct. 15 at 9 p.m., "Space Mysteries: Comets—Target Earth?" Oct. 20 at 10 p.m., "Farther Than the Eye Can See" (on blind athlete Erik Weihenmayaar's conquest of Mt. Everest).

At Alchemy

Alchemy (708-1305) at Frontera Verde Drive, Ortigas Center offers three entertainment venues: The O Lounge, the Liquid Bar and the Vapor Club. The O Lounge features Caliph8 on Mondays, Verden and the Allstars on Tuesdays, DJs **Anna Barcelona** and **Rodney Martinez** on Wednesdays, The Jody Lee Project Band on Thursdays, DJ **Jason Soong** on Fridays, and Curve on Saturdays.

Merk's marks a milestone

Jazz, disco, Motown on a Thursday night

By Pocholo Concepcion
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

"I FEEL LIKE A WIDE-EYED CHILD AGAIN," quipped Richard Merk, as he hugged and greeted guests at the fifth anniversary party of his baby venture, Merk's Bar Bistro, at Greenbelt 3, Makati.

The live music venue, marketed as a destination for good food as well, has gained a reputation for gathering some of the best Pinoy jazz musicians especially on Wednesday nights, when pianist Romy Posadas, bassist Roger Herrera, percussionist Bo Razon, vibes master Eddie Katindig and Richard himself on vocals, are joined by young blood like sax player Alvin Cornista.

But this celebration fell on a Thursday and the band onstage, Route 70, was poised to play light party music. That meant disco numbers as in "Trapped in a Stairway" and other 1970s dance floor staples.

Show stoppers

Richard's sister, New Jersey-based Rachel Ann Wolfe, here to promote a self-penned CD, seemed to relive her teenage days as she sang more disco stuff from Alicia Bridges and Gloria Gaynor.

Things got interesting with Route 70's covers of The Fifth Dimension, Temptations and a slew of '60s classics. The crowd lapped up everything they heard and even clapped along to an upbeat Barry Manilow medley.

But when Arthur Manuntag went on stage to jam, nobody knew what hit them. The power of his voice was so compelling, women in the audience got up and danced.

"That was 'Vehicle' by the group Ides of March," Arthur replied when we asked if it was a Blood, Sweat & Tears tune.

Ricky Davao was called next, and before we could even shout, "Rock and roll," he had started to groove with Queen's "Crazy Little Thing Called Love."

Then it occurred to us that love had a lot to do with the inception and success of a club like Merk's. The owner's love for music is genuine and admirable, stamped on his very genes by his mother, Annie (Brazil), and encouraged no end by his wife, Roni, who stood in the sidelines during the party to mind the guests.

Just when it looked like the night would end with nothing more than the memory of pleasure, Richard led the band with his version of Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On."

It was punctuated by fun ad libs, yet Richard was lucid enough to remind us that music could, indeed, go beyond entertainment.

RICKY Davao and Richard Merk

RACHEL Ann Wolfe

DUTCH Director of Migration and Asylum Han Mauritz Schaapveld and Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr.

ARTHUR Manuntag and Cory Quirino

RONI Merk and daughter Manna

ROUNDUP

Musical comedy

CENTERstage Musical Theater, in cooperation with Ateneo Blue Repertory, will stage next year the rock 'n' roll musical comedy "All Shook Up," which opened on Broadway in 2005.

The musical includes the songs from the King of Rock Elvis Presley.

Auditions for all roles in the show will be held Oct. 20 at the Fine Arts Theater, 3rd floor Gonzaga Bldg., Ateneo De Manila University, and Oct. 21 at the Penthouse of the Philippine Stock Exchange Center, Exchange Road Ortigas Center Pasig City, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The show will open Feb. 1 at the AFP Theater.

Call 6346488.

Benefit concert

MEXICO CITY—Hip-hop group Black Eyed Peas put on a benefit concert in Mexico Friday night to raise money for local children who can't afford a decent education.

"It feels good to be able to help the youth because at one point in time we were teenagers who loved getting involved with the arts and there wasn't really that many programs in East LA, where I'm from," said band front man Will.i.am at a news conference before the show at Mexico City's National Auditorium.

Proceeds will fund educational programs for some 1,500 kids, said the group that recorded the albums "Elephunk" and "Monkey Business." *AP*

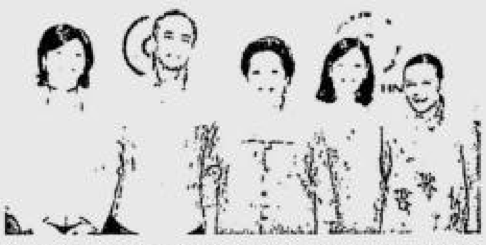
ABS-CBN airs tribute to FPJ

A TRIBUTE TO THE "King of Philippine Cinema," Fernando Poe Jr. (FPJ), will air on ABS-CBN starting Oct. 20.

Called "Cinema FPJ—Da King on ABS-CBN," it will feature blockbuster movies such as "Panday," "Roman Rapido," "Eseng ng Tondo," "Kahit Konting Pagtingin" and "Isusumbong Kita sa Tatay Ko."

ABS-CBN recently acquired the FPJ library of movies after sealing an agreement with the late action star's widow, actress Susan Roces.

The movie library includes all films that FPJ starred in, directed and produced.


SUSAN Roces, center, and daughter Grace Poe-Llamanzares, right, with network executives Leng Raymundo, Eugenio Lopez III and Cory Vidanes

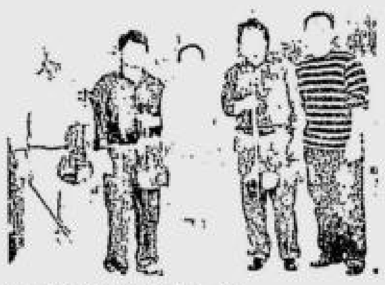
ABS-CBN will also air this December a never before seen music video that the actor was working on before he died.

CLICK!

Renowned violinists

The Saraza Family, renowned violinists, will perform in episode 5 of "Power to Unite with Elvira," hosted by Elvira Yap-Go and aired every Tuesday night, 7-7:30 on NBN 4. The theme is "Love is Not Selfish—Social Transformation."

Rev. Antonieto D. Cabajog, bishop of Surigao, is special guest. Also featured is the Javiniar family of Antipolo City.


THE SARAZA Family

Secretly straight and squirming twosome

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

LIKE MANY OF THE OTHER ADAM Sandler comedies, "I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry" can be painfully juvenile. But as with most titles in his filmography, it can also be a time-killing guilty pleasure. Directed by frequent collaborator Dennis Dugan, the movie cashes in on contemporary gay issues, while utilizing obligatory loads of slapstick and crass punchlines. So yes, it's more of the same, but we get Sandler and his usual gaggle of comedians playing characters that, this time, react to some touchy lifestyle topics.

Sandler's done pretty much the same confused jerk role before, so his Chuck, a New York fireman and bimbo-magnet, isn't anything different. He's quite homophobic, too. But he proves that he's willing to be open-minded when a longtime work buddy, the widower Larry (Kevin James from "King of Queens"), convinces him to fake a gay union to fix an insurance claim oversight. Larry persuades Chuck to be his pseudo-domestic partner for the benefit of his kids. The lothario nervously, but generously, signs all pertinent documents.

They're forced to live together when their partnership's authenticity is questioned. So we have straight guys acting and talking gay in front of others, but squirming through the process. It's not always funny.

Fumbling

Gender identity jokes have been done better in other films and many TV sitcoms like "Will and Grace."

There's also the old angle where the straight guy pretends to be gay to be near the girl of his dreams. In previous comedies starring Sandler, the love interest plays a crucial part in the equation. Here, Jessica Biel plays the fake couple's lawyer, Alex, who doesn't suspect a thing, especially not Chuck's growing attraction to her.

As with any story that involves secrets, you just know that everything will be exposed in due time. But "Chuck and Larry" gets too stretched and quite dull in parts when the "lovers" are investigated. It reaches a point that almost feels as if it's fumbling and grasping for a proper resolution. And it feels especially strange that situations become uncomfortably serious, that whatever passes for humor in such scenes is just sucked out or rendered ineffective.

In this particular movie, however, some of the laughs come from unexpected places. Various misfits colorfully expand Chuck and Larry's world. Nick Swardson (the stalker from "Blades of Glory") plays Alex's loud-and-proud brother. Almost unrecognizable is Rob Schneider as the mop-topped, bespectacled minister. Robert Smigel deadpans as the mailman with unrequited feelings, while Ving Rhames plays Duncan, the toughie fireman with a secret. Oh, and look out for singer Dave Matthews as a fey dress shop guy.

Checklist

"Chuck and Larry" goes through a checklist of elements that pertain to the gay lifestyle; brief glimpses at personal metamorphoses, the fellowships, the romantic bonds, and the creative outlets of some gay people are shown. If anything, each of the characters quickly establishes his sexuality early on, so collectively, they're true to themselves through the course of the story. Gay romance, sadly, is still outlandish or weird to some people (it's strange which unfunny parts get giggles), but that fact is reflected in the movie, too.

KEVIN James, left, and Adam Sandler as Larry and Chuck

MARK Herras and Maureen Larrazabal get ready for a sketch.

DIREK Uro, second from right, urges writers to ride jeepneys and hang out in wet markets.

Bursting…

From page F4

the time on ABS-CBN.)

Unfortunately, the Kapamilya offer was limited to the financial aspect. "I was a bit disappointed," Bitoy says.

On top of creative freedom, the Kapuso network also offered premium exposure. "We were replacing 'Vilma' in the Friday night prime time slot," says Bitoy. "But that also meant that the pressure was on."

It was a tough climb to the top, to be sure, but by the late 1990s, it became evident that they were on the right track.

"'Dating Doon' (spoof of the religious show "Ang Dating Daan") put this show on the map," Ogie opines.

Bitoy relates that bright ideas can come from anyone. "Ara suggested that we spoof Ricky Reyes' shampoo ads. Antonio Aquitania thought up Sex Balls, our spoof of the Sex Bomb Dancers."

"When we get text jokes, we share them with the writers," says Ara.

"Francine [Prieto] never runs out of text jokes. Sometimes she texts us in the early morning hours. That's why everyone hates her," Bitoy jests.

Director Uro de la Cruz says "Bubble" is not afraid to embrace new technologies. "Texting has democratized comedy. Now, everyone can be a comedian. As gag show writers, we shouldn't be threatened. We should always be aware of the latest."

He points out that the show has churned out spoofs of everything, from MTV (Music Tagalog Version) to YouTube (Iy-oTube).

Back to basics

But there is also a need to go back to basics, Uro asserts. "I always tell my writers to hang out in public markets, ride jeepneys, go to Quiapo and Sta. Cruz to see what Filipinos are laughing at."

There's a science to their craft, says head writer Cesar Cosme.

Each episode is a product of regular brainstorming, relates Cosme, more popularly known as Bro. Willy, sidekick of Brod Pete in "Dating Doon."

"I meet with Bitoy and seven other writers once a week over lunch in a restaurant," he says. "We spend hours just shooting the breeze, and get down to business only in the last 30 minutes."

The show's 12th anniversary special, "Bubble Gang the Movie for TV," is the product of one such meeting.

"We came up with an action-musical," Bitoy quips, "with a gay man as lead."

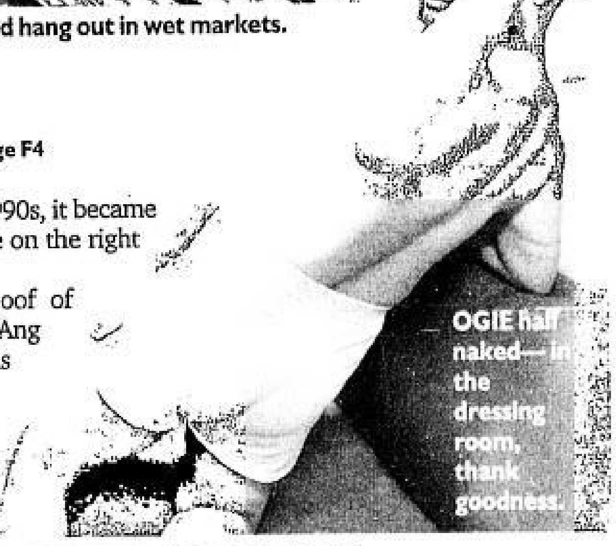
Bitoy wrote 11 songs for the two-part special, airing on the last two Fridays of October. "But I left room for Ogie's suggestions," he says.

"I heard the songs in the recording studio," adds Ogie. "I even sang backup on some of the tracks."

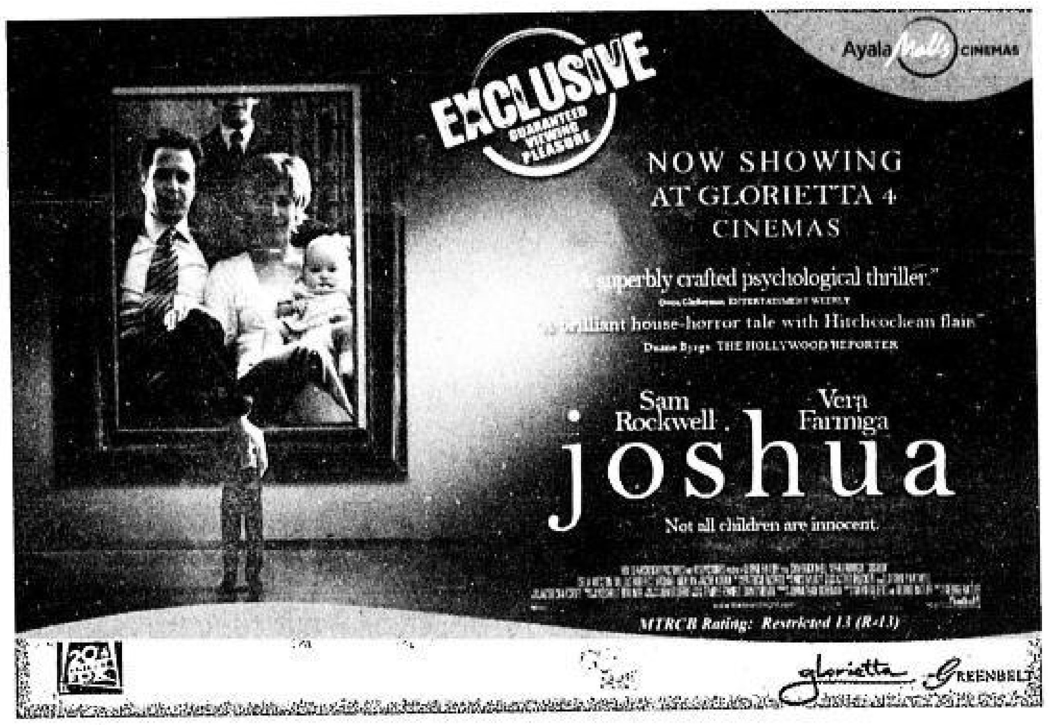
It's apparent that Ogie has checked in his ego at the door.

"It's all about making the show better," Ogie affirms.

Yes, indeed, there's no vanity in comedy.



OGIE half naked— in the dressing room, thank goodness.



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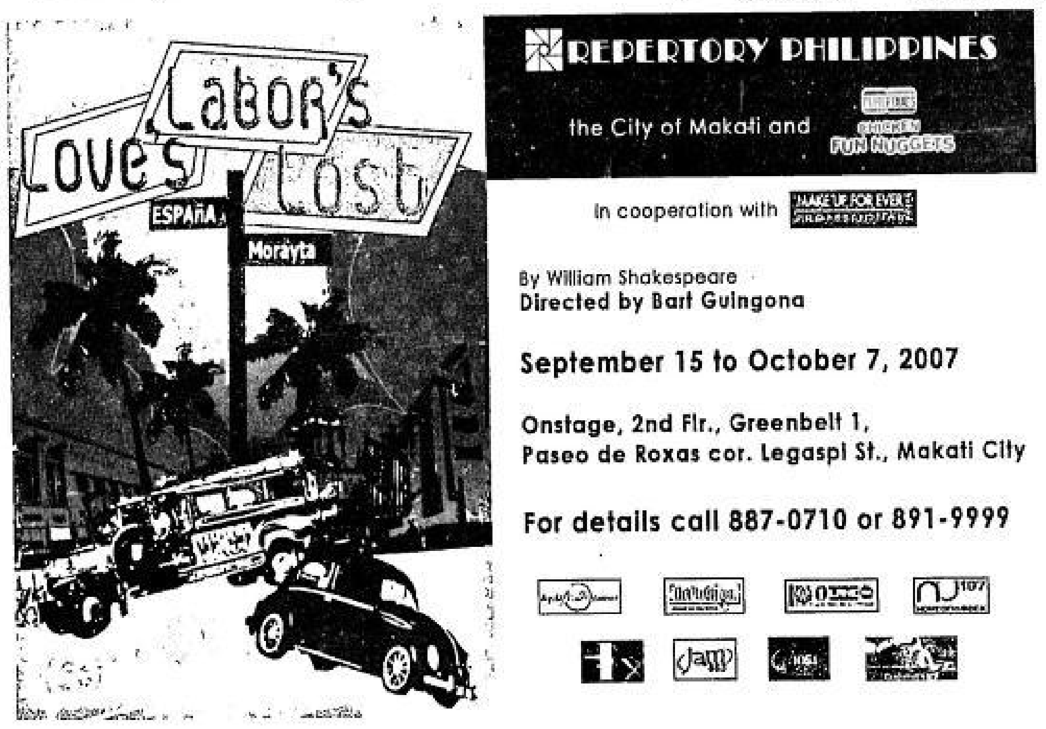

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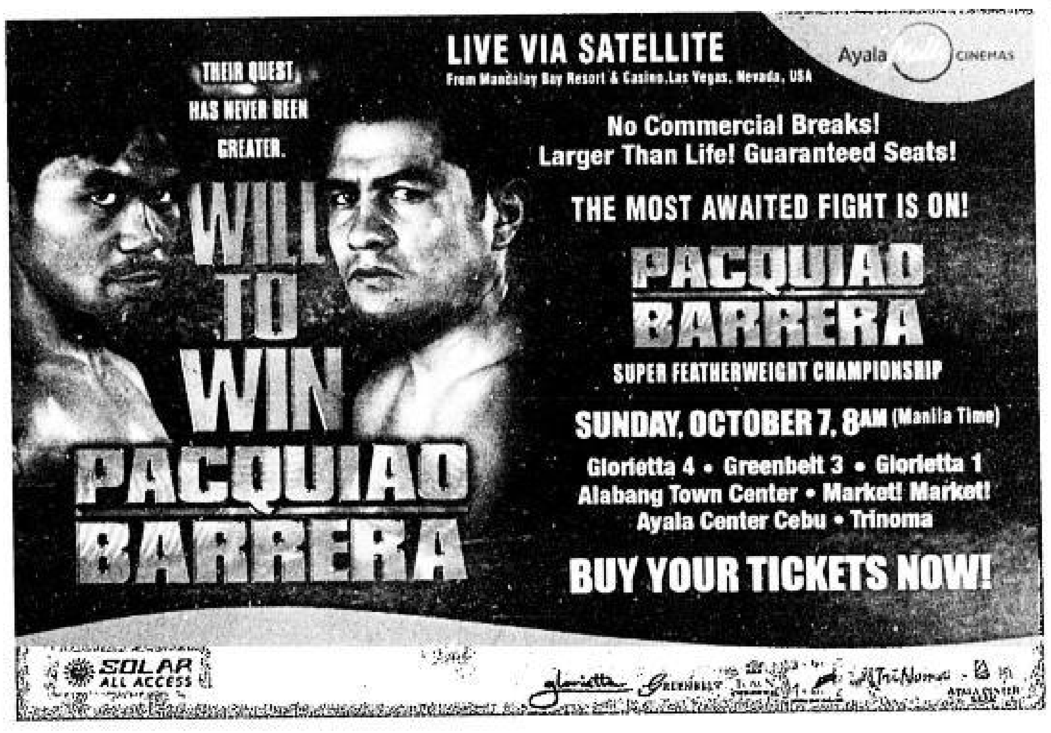

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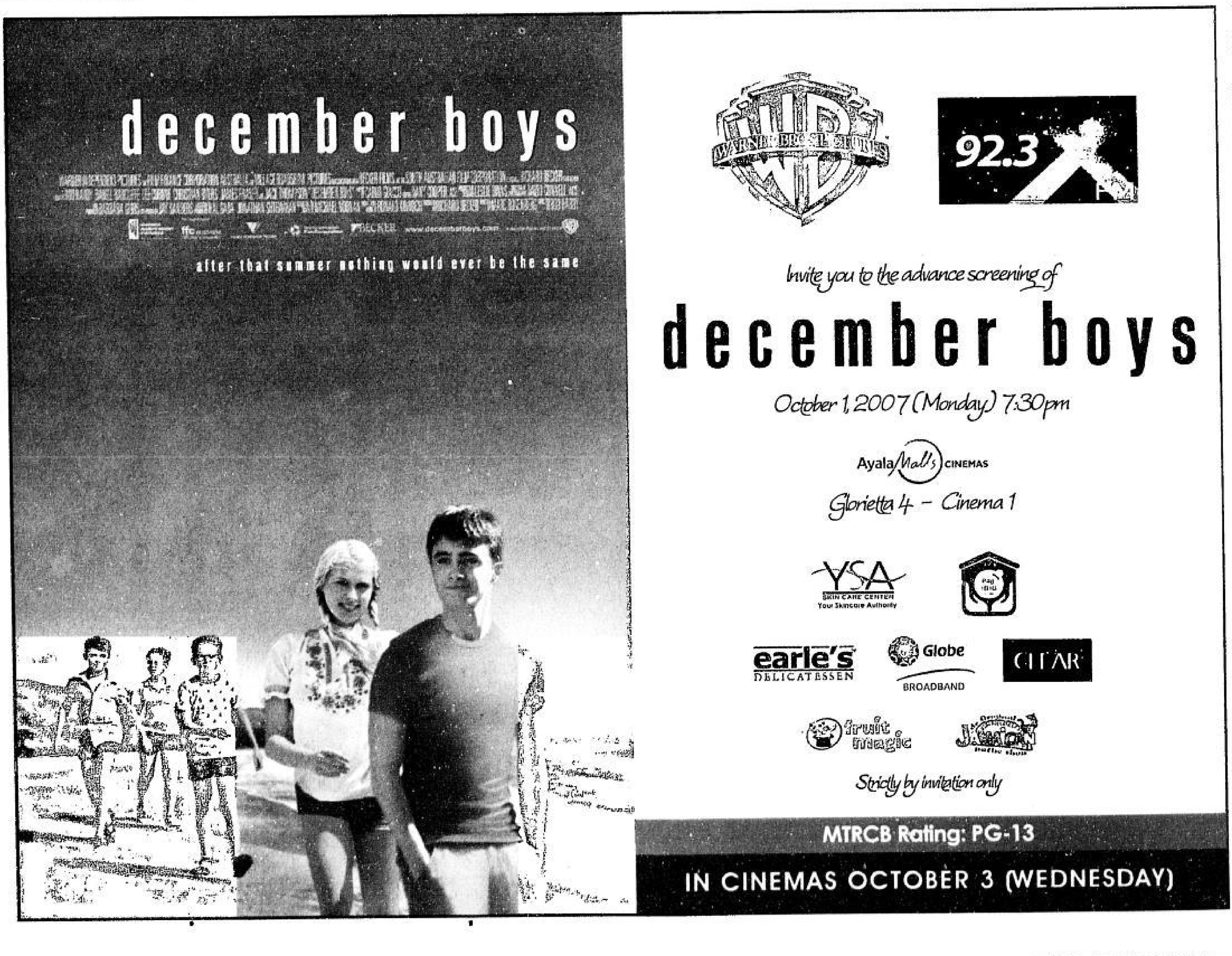

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